O. HENRY MEMORIAL AWARD PRIZE STORIES OF 1930

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Memorial Award

PRIZE STORIES OF 1930

SELECTED AND EDITED BY

BLANCHE COLTON WILLIAMS

AUTHOR OF "A HANDBOOK ON STORY WRITING"
"OUR SHORT STORY WRITERS," ETC.
HEAD, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH,
HUNTER COLLEGE OF THE
CITY OF NEW YORK

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN & COMPANY, INC.
GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK
1930

PRINTED AT THE *Country Life Press*, GARDEN CITY, N. Y., U. S. A.

813.508
P961
1930

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FIRST EDITION

TO MY SISTERS

IN

DELTA ZETA

BEARERS OF THE LAMP

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge gratefully the courtesies of judges, authors, editors, agents, and publishers, without whose coöperation this series of *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories* would cease to be. I wish also to thank the assistants who shared the burden of reading: Miss Grace Brooks Conner, Mrs. E. H. Craddock, Miss Elizabeth Nugent, Miss Isabel Walker, and Mrs. Frances Gilchrist Wood.

B. C. W.

CONTENTS*

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION. By Blanche Colton Williams . . .	ix
DRESSING-UP. By W. R. Burnett	3
NEITHER JEW NOR GREEK. By William M. John .	17
THE SACRIFICE OF THE MAIDENS. By Elizabeth Madox Roberts	35
CORONER'S INQUEST. By Marc Connelly	47
CARELESS LOVE. By Roark Bradford	55
HERSELF. By Katherine Newlin Burt	71
FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY. By Irvin S. Cobb . .	91
THE ELEPHANT FORGETS. By Courtney Ryley Cooper	113
THE SILVER KNIGHT. By Miriam Allen de Ford . .	131
MISFORTUNE'S ISLE. By Richard Matthews Hallet	145
A MAN OF THE WORLD. By John Held, Jr. . . .	173
MLLE. IRENE THE GREAT. By Nunnally Johnson .	185
THE LITTLE WIFE. By William March	205
ENCARNACIÓN. By Alicia O'Reardon Overbeck . .	219
THE CONTINENTAL ANGLE. By William Dudley Pelley	235
THE DIAMOND RING. By Julia Peterkin	253
LOBSTER JOHN'S ANNIE. By Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements	271
CONJUH. By Wilbur Daniel Steele	283
A MATTER OF STANDARDS. By Julian Street . . .	307
BORN ON AN ICEBERG. By Captain John W. Thomason, Jr.	325
APPENDIX	339

*After the four prize-winning stories, the order is alphabetical by authors.

INTRODUCTION

With the publication of this volume the O. Henry Memorial Committee completes the twelfth year of work. This work has been the reading of short stories by American authors, published in American magazines, the award of prizes to the stories adjudged best, and the preparation for the press of the twelve volumes containing the candidates nominated for the prizes. Annually, beginning 1919, two awards have been made: $500 for the best short story, $250 for the second best. Annually, beginning 1922, a special award of $100 has been made for the best short short story. Every year the editor and chairman has been aided by readers and, in making the awards, by a committee of judges. The personnel of the various groups of judges and the decisions of the several groups will be found in the Introductions of *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories.* Awards amounting to more than $10,000 have been paid to the prize-story authors, whose names are also recorded in the Introductions.

In the eleven months from August, 1929, to June, 1930, were read the stories listed in the Appendix (See page 341). This list, though long, makes no pretense to completeness. The omission of a story may indicate that it escaped a reader or that the reader did not believe that particular story worth recording.

From the stories in List 1, the chairman selected eighteen for this the 1930 book and for rating by the four final judges. She also selected a secondary list of eight, as alternates, in the event not all the authors of the first eighteen could be found in the brief time for securing permission to reprint. One permission arrived after the first ranking story on the second list had been obtained. Both stories in question are included.

The judges:

Herschel Brickell, critic and columnist.

John Macy, author of *The Spirit of American Literature,*

The Story of the World's Literature, About Women, etc.

FRANCES GILCHRIST WOOD, author of "Turkey Red," "Shoes," *Gospel Four Corners*, etc.

BLANCHE COLTON WILLIAMS (chairman), Head of the Department of English, Hunter College of the City of New York; author of *A Handbook on Story Writing*, etc., and (with John Macy) *Do You Know English Literature?*

When returns from the first three judges came in and to them was added the chairman's rating, a tie was discovered, the first in the twelve years these prizes have been awarded. Though hoping a tie may not occur again soon, the chairman preferred not to exercise the right of casting a second and deciding vote. The first prize, $500, for the best short short story is shared equally, therefore, between "Dressing-Up," by W. R. Burnett, *Harper's*, November, 1929, and "Neither Jew nor Greek," by William M. John, *Century*, August, 1929. The four ratings assigned "Dressing-Up" are 5—9—2—2; the four ratings assigned "Neither Jew nor Greek" are 1—2—9—6. Obviously, the average placement (4.5) is the same for each story.

The second prize, $250, for the second best story, is awarded to "The Sacrifice of the Maidens," by Elizabeth Madox Roberts, in *Letters*, a quarterly magazine published by the University of Kentucky. The four ratings assigned this story are 8—3—5—3, giving an average placement of 4.75.

The chairman also selected seven short short stories, only one of which was to be included herein, and submitted them to the following judges: ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR EMMA K. TEMPLE, MISS SHIRLEY V. LONG, and MISS ISABEL WALKER; all are members of the Department of English in Hunter College, and instructors in story writing. The returns from this committee award the special prize of $100, for the best short short story, to "Coroner's Inquest," by Marc Connelly, *Collier's*, February 8, 1930. The alternate is "Afterwards," by William Closson Emory, *The Household Magazine*, April, 1930. Mr. Connelly's story was placed first by two judges; Mr. Emory's, by one judge.

"Dressing-Up," according to the author, is based on an actual event, but the handling is his own and the living participants would not recognize themselves. Gathering material for his novel, *Little Cæsar*, Mr. Burnett spent over a

year in Chicago, where he found the professional killer by no means an imaginary figure. "A good professional killer makes a lot of money, and as far as the law is concerned is practically immune. He is not immune, however, to the bullets of rival gangsters; in fact, gang reprisals are the greatest drawbacks to his career." Mr. Brickell who, with the chairman, gave this story second place says that perhaps one appeal is the topical interest of the subject; but, disregarding the fascination that gangsters and their deeds seem to have for all of us just now, the piece is an excellent example of the type. It has suspense, but the reader is never in doubt that the gangster is going to be "taken for a ride." "The story has a morbid appeal," he adds. "Through it one looks as through a window as a man tries to escape from a trap, with the watcher fully aware that he cannot escape." Another element of interest lies, as Mr. Brickell notes, in the irony: "Blue, in his lavender silk underwear with his swell moll, about to set off for a pleasure trip to New York . . . and then the Thompson begins to sputter." The chairman admires the cold objectivity of the narrative, which has a further appeal for readers who prefer drama without explanatory comment, and delights in the technique that produces an ultra-contemporary tale marked by adherence to the classic unities.

Of "Neither Jew nor Greek" the author writes that it is purely a product of imagination so far as plot is concerned. "But I do know," he says, "the people of whom I write, having been born in Trinidad, Colorado, from where Tumbleweed Valley spreads east. After being graduated from college, I returned to the ranches and farms my father owned in that district." Only in recent years Mr. John has found leisure to paint in words some of the interesting characters he has known. In ranking this story second, Mr. Macy comments on its character and point and touch of pathos. "Pretty good satire on the human race in general," he sums up. Mrs. Wood, in placing the story first, declares that it is one "to make a Westerner chuckle at encountering the real thing once more." Conducive to readability, in the chairman's opinion, is Uncle Asa Mulberry's easy, apparently rambling dialect, which disposes character clues as if unaware of them and rounds up the action with the seemingly unconscious ease of the local gossip.

"The Sacrifice of the Maidens" is, in Mr. Macy's words,

"by far the most finely written of all, and should be first, except that it is not quite a 'story.' What story there is is told by implication, subtly and skillfully done. The scene is like a symbolic painting. This suggestive kind of thing is rare enough and has little in common with what seem to be magazine stories." Every judge was impressed by its stylistic perfection, as is evident from the generally high rating. Beautiful as youth, sad as death, this "Sacrifice of the Maidens" touches the height of rhythmic prose, prose of lovely cadences that rise and fall with the tide of ineffable feeling and its ebb from the shores of thought. The story, to be sure, is slight; but it catches a climactic moment of one life, even of many lives. The chairman will not forget the day when by accident she came upon this gem, precious enough to enhance the fame of the author of *The Time of Man* and *The Great Meadow*.

Since *The Green Pastures* became the Pulitzer prize play of the 1929–30 season, Marc Connelly has been praised for the drama as Roark Bradford has been praised for the Negro tales that suggested the drama. By one of those coincidence relations that lend entertainment even to the routine of compiling *Prize Stories*, both authors are represented in this volume. To make convincing a tragedy about midgets, to give to it dignity and pathos, besides investing at least one of the characters with an atmosphere of creeping horror, is to achieve something quite out of the ordinary. "Coroner's Inquest" is an extraordinary achievement in brief compass. The chairman particularly admires the end which, though leaving the reader uncertain, at the same time satisfies him. "'Coroner's Inquest,'" Miss Walker comments, "has a touch of the universal, a twist of the unique, a pulse of pity, all in the close confines of the short short story." Miss Long approves the neat characterization; Mrs. Temple appreciates the originality of theme.

"Careless Love," written far from Louisiana—in Santa Fé, to be exact—illustrates with a number of other Bradford stories published in *Collier's* the author's humorous interpretation of the cotton-plantation darkey. *Ol' Man Adam an' His Chillun* is a definite, accurate report of the delta-country Negro seen through the temperament of genius. So is "Careless Love." The exchange of wives, subject for tragedy or for

sordid realism, is employed here with a fine insouciance which everyone who has "lived among" the Negroes of the locality will recognize as apt in tone and spirit. Mr. Bradford's "Child of God" will be recalled as the prize winner in this series for the year 1927.

For third place, Mr. Brickell selected Katharine Newlin Burt's "Herself," because "it succeeds in making a story of a psychological struggle that is not too difficult to understand in its symbolism—such difficulty is a common fault with stories of this genus—and that is interesting for itself. It also has a poetical beauty of style and its ending, while right and logical, comes, for some good reason, as a surprise to the reader." The chairman, ranking it high, sees in "Herself" a reminiscence or suggestion of Hawthorne. A styled piece of workmanship by a writer whose stories have kept pace in quality with their increase in quantity, this tale is a worthy addition to the list headed in America by Poe's "William Wilson" and including the Scotch Stevenson's "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

"Faith, Hope and Charity" was selected by the chairman as a capital example of the Fate story. Other American instances, from Hawthorne's "The Ambitious Guest" to O. Henry's "Roads of Destiny," in following—though a long way off—the Œdipus tale, concentrated upon one character in demonstrating that man cannot escape destiny. Irvin S. Cobb has tripled the effect by requisitioning men of three nations, each one of whom, dreading punishment peculiar to his country, tries to flee from that punishment, and in so doing he has tripled the strength of the axiom. The nicety of execution by which the author arranges his situation in the right locale and provides the ultimate defeat for his Frenchman, Spaniard, and Italian in brief time admirably illustrates the economy of the trained short story craftsman. Mr. Cobb's "Snake Doctor" was the first prize winner in 1922, and "An Episode at Pintail Lake" was included in the volume for 1928.

Courtney Ryley Cooper's "The Elephant Forgets," reprinted here as one of the most diverting animal stories of the year, should be read in connection with Edison Marshall's "The Elephant Remembers," reprinted in the first volume of this series (1919). "The hill people say," runs a line in Mr.

Marshall's tale, "that the elephant memory is the greatest single marvel in the jungle." "An elephant," says Mr. Cooper, "has exactly the same memory as a human being. Sometimes it works unerringly. And in most elephant stories it does so work. Most often it must be jogged by association or an incident." Old Mom's mind gropes, as that of a human being gropes, for light from the past to illuminate her knowledge of the young bull. And she finds it. Perhaps the two women judges most relish seventy-year Old Mom's conquest of Goliath, a stripling of fifty, and his unconditional surrender. Seldom does the feminine win fairly in a physical fight! Mr. Cooper's familiarity with circus animals, intimate and exact, lends conviction to whatever anecdote or epic he relates about life near or under the Big Top.

"The Silver Knight," recommended to the committee by three persons—including the writer Conrad Richter—challenges through its novelty of idea. The reader may feel somewhat skeptical at first, suspecting that the author's symbolic purpose provoked invention; but he experiences growing certainty that the phenomenon described may be found in real life. For the doubtfully inclined, Miss de Ford's statement might be offered as a footnote to her title page: "In 1925, while I was typing an article on 'Cold Light in Living Organisms' for my husband (Maynard Shipley), I ran across the statement that Kane, on one of his Arctic expeditions, had seen an Eskimo who was afflicted as my Roger was in the story. It occurred to me immediately what a curse this rare disorder would be to a sensitive, civilized man." That fourteen magazines rejected "The Silver Knight" before it was accepted by Mr. Kofoed, of *The American Short Story*, illustrates—for one thing—editorial hesitancy in seizing upon the unusual. True, Roger's curse might well be too bizarre for art, but it has been subdued to the author's purpose—much as was the letter A found once upon a time in a Salem chest. Miss de Ford's translations of Lucretius, Juvenal, Catullus, and the Augustan poets reveal her understanding of the Latin classics not more than her own lyric ability. And "The Silver Knight" is the creation of a poet as well as storyteller.

"Misfortune's Isle," by Richard Matthews Hallet, is one of a series of stories that have appeared in the *Saturday*

Evening Post for some months. They deal with the doings on sea and land of the old Salem traders and sailors. "The stories grow in part out of my own experience at sea," says the author, "since I have served as seaman or officer in a good many different kinds of ships in odd corners of the world; partly, out of long study of the logs and journals which are collected in the Essex Institute, at Salem, Massachusetts." Mr. Hallet heard legends about the upas tree for years, "but," he confesses, "I can't say I ever saw with my own eyes a good specimen of that tree. Yet I have been shipmates with men who swore it was certain death to sleep in the shade of the upas, and it is certainly from this tree that the Dyaks get their poison." The chairman selected this story as a gorgeous specimen of the romantic *genre:* scenes of the past and far-away; an exotic lady; brave gentlemen; villains; a fight at sea, and a spectacular climax—all are here in novel combination.

If any writer, any artist, knows the foibles of the green salad generation, that writer and artist is John Held, Jr. Like Captain John W. Thomason, Jr., also represented in this book, Mr. Held illustrates his own writing; in fact, he was a famous illustrator before beginning to write. One fancies him reading scripts and thinking, as he illustrated them, "I could write better stuff, myself!" He could and he does. In "A Man of the World" he dramatizes the pathetic pose of sophistication affected by the young moderns, as he has done in other tales collected under the title, *Grim Youth.* Chiefly in this story he has emphasized the callousness of the callow, without obvious effort, without epigrammatic intention, merely reporting the facts. Tarkington's seventeens would blush at owning kinship with the Spugs of to-day; Fitzgerald's flappers, in a nearer background, are ancestral gray ladies in Paisley shawls in comparison with Held's Valkyries. Somehow, we guess that Mr. Held knows what he is about, that he is a realist in the width of Spug's trousers and the height of Peggy's heels no more than in the word pictures of their owners. In short, he can practise what may become a lost art: he can observe; and he has good eyes.

The best instance this year of Nunnally Johnson's abundant humor appears to the chairman to be "Mlle. Irene the Great." This story has its origin in an experience which the

author relates as follows: "A half dozen years ago I met the original of the lady lion tamer. I was taken to a party at her home. The place was a mad house. All of her family and guests were 'artists,' exhibiting their talents either in the circus or in vaudeville. As little tributes to their hostess, these talents were put on display, in a room about the size of a telephone booth, and inasmuch as several acts went on at one time, the spectators had all they could do to keep from being brained by flying Indian clubs, ground and lofty tumblers, and adagio dancers. Toward the shank of the evening, our hostess confided to me that talent wasn't what it was in her day, and showed me to her boudoir, which was decorated with almost speaking likenesses of the lions she had cracked the whip over when she was in her prime. 'You don't see such lions these days,' she said." Mr. Johnson adds that "Mlle. Irene the Great" took about four years to settle, but of course there was no hurry about it. "If a situation warrants a story it will, sooner or later, drop itself into a story; if it doesn't, it won't." Funny as this extravaganza is, a single impact of accumulated mirth, it is not far ahead of "Twenty Horses," for which see (if you have not read it) the *Saturday Evening Post* of May 17, 1930, and hasten to hysteria.

"The Little Wife" has its genesis in a small scene that fell under Mr. March's notice in a hotel lobby. A man received and read a telegram, changed countenance, tore up the message, and dropped the bits into a waste-basket; then, recovering himself, he talked and laughed with the group about him. Here was the airblown particle which, as Henry James would say, "lodged in a handful of kindly earth," produced the character of Joe Hinckley and his vain struggle to deny tragedy. Mr. Brickell says that his reasons for giving this tale first place are that Mr. March "has taken a theme that is as nearly universal as any in the world, namely, the proximity of death, and has shown in a manner unforgettably moving the shattering effect of the end of a life upon a survivor. The directness and simplicity of the story give it strength; it has other striking qualities, and not the least of these is the characterization of the central figure, the vividness with which we are made to see him." He also comments on the success of atmosphere and on the admirable suspense: "We know that in all probability the little wife is dead, but we hope, as Joe

hoped, that she isn't." The committee is indebted to the story writer Frances Gaither (See page 348) for calling attention to this fine piece of realistic art.

Of "Encarnación" the editors of *Harper's* stated, "We understand that it is based on fact throughout." As wife of a mining engineer in the Bolivian Andes, Mrs. Overbeck is well acquainted with her setting and the character types in that setting. "It strikes me as a finely done study in a tragedy that was inevitable," says one of the judges in his comment upon "Encarnación." The chairman sees in it the exquisite operation of a sensitive mind that has lifted into the realm of art a shocking tragedy all too common. From the greeting, "*Señora*," to the final "*Adiós, Señora mía*," the little tale, like Rossetti's "Jenny," presents

> A cipher of man's changeless sum
> Of lust, past, present, and to come . .
> . . . A riddle that one shrinks
> To challenge from the scornful sphinx.

"The Continental Angle," by William Dudley Pelley, manifests itself one of the Paris, Vermont, tales the earlier of which gave the author national importance. Ten years ago "The Face in the Window," reprinted in Volume II of this series, cut a cross section of life centered around a single brave deed that illustrated a woman's physical courage. Here Mr. Pelley slices longitudinally, incisively shearing through nearly a score of years in the simple unassuming life of a Dutch woman who sets up her bakery in the provincial town just before the late war, and whose difficulties lead to an admirable climax. The chief accomplishment is Mrs. Krule's character, out of which logically grow the positive phases of the action. Though her proportions are elephantine and might have provided cause for humor, they provoke no smile. Her essential kindliness, simplicity. and nobility forbid laughter at her expense.

"The Diamond Ring," one of three Negro tales that compelled consideration by virtue of their excellence and are reprinted in this collection, portrays with sympathy the character of Bubba and his heart-breaking desire to ride on the merry-go-round. If ever a little colored boy was drawn with greater reality and understanding than here by Mrs. Peterkin,

we do not recall where or when. The simple plot, moreover, is ample for the purpose. The loss of that diamond ring—foreseen from the time Bubba was commissioned to get it from the post-office—cannot but make any heart sink with Bubba's; but fortunately to prevent too great suspense, suspicion suggests that the diamond was probably one of glass. The narratives of Mrs. Peterkin, from "Maum Lou" (which was chosen for the 1925 volume of this series, and which antedates her Pulitzer prize-winning novel) to her latest work, are among the documents of American literary history.

The first choice of Mr. Macy is "Lobster John's Annie," by Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements. "It makes excellent use of the device of viewing a tragedy through innocent, unsuspecting eyes," says Mr. Macy; "it gets the whole situation economically, compactly." His conclusion, "Honest writing," is a fit sequence to Colin Clements's statement: "You ask how we happened to write the story. The answer is *Revolt.*" He and Miss Ryerson (Mrs. Clements) decided they would do something away from the machine-made story. They did, "Lobster John's Annie" being the third of a series bought by the editor of the *Stratford Magazine*. The story is partly true, partly fiction, and the real background is Terminal Island, near San Pedro. The chairman, who gave the story fourth place, likes the use of the children's point of view and recommends the result as a companion piece to Rose Wilder Lane's "Innocence" (See *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories*, 1922).

Wilbur Daniel Steele, who has been living at Chapel Hill and writing stories of the coastal Carolinas, is represented herein by "Conjuh." The marvel of this tale, one of three Negro narratives in the volume, lies in its execution. The way Delia Manigault's Paris life is flung against the background of her old home in the Sea Islands, through that delirium which also tricks her into thinking the black bowl of the Carolina night is her music hall near the Champs Elysées, is the way of a master. Where is a scene more colorful, more vibrant, than that in which Delia dances?—in which she cries, "*Souviens-toi!*" cries vainly, breaks the necklace, and has "a vivid illusion of baubles turned bubbles and bubbles broken in the air." "Conjuh" should be followed by "Ki" as it was followed in *Pictorial Review*, which was the

fortunate sponsor of both these conjure tales. In "Ki" Mr. Steele offers a wer-deer evoked—at least for the character that matters—through an old mammy's black magic.

To Julian Street's "A Matter of Standards" the chairman assigned first place; Mrs. Wood ranked it fourth. Any one of three stories by Mr. Street might have been requested for this collection. To "Christmas at Bagdad," which arrived too late for consideration, the reader is referred for a universal theme which, though not infrequently exploited, seems just to have found a story-teller equipped for making the most of it. "Chameleon," in paying respects to an actress, makes out a case for the chameleon quality, which is the very basis of success in histrionic art. Of "A Matter of Standards" nothing can be said that is not better said or suggested in the story itself. The obvious satire—razor-blade cuts—of certain ladies who seek publicity through advertisement pages slashes amusingly in more than one direction. "No, just send it to me," replies Mrs. Peale to Dillman, who has said, "We'll send a check to whatever charity you name." In another quarter: "What made you think I use a Eureka?" inquired Bush. Does Dillman seize the clue? Not he! He feels not the slightest cerebration as he responds from habit, "Oh, that doesn't make any difference." Again, Bush refuses to recommend the razor he uses, and has used. What of that for the advertisers who spend thousands, as Dillman has done here? Writing advertisement "literature" is business; writing literature about advertisements is art. The only literature of this kind, so far as the chairman can recall, is "A Matter of Standards."

"Born on an Iceberg" Mrs. Wood ranks second, seeing Hanne Bryn "not cold-blooded, but the kind of nurse who thinks only of the relief of pain as the one thing needful in a sick and warring world. Her intensity holds the reader with a like feeling, even to the last startling act." As might be deduced, the sources of the story were in Nicaragua in the course of the recent trouble. The author, who is a captain in the Marine Corps, says, "I saw some of it and a marine officer of my acquaintance saw some of it, and I just put the story together." The vigorous, straightforward account, an instance of compact, direct narrative, is worth reading without the climax. But what the climax adds! "With a steady hand,

making sure that no case would awaken, she put them all under." The first published version of "Born on an Iceberg" gains picturesqueness from the illustrations; for, as has been said, Captain John W. Thomason, Jr., makes his own drawings, which are as he would have them.

The chairman had intended to write a paragraph about the status of the short story; but that paragraph may be reduced to a sentence or two, and an allusion. If the earth and the literature thereof are hell-bent, so is the short story as part of that literature; if literature is evolving upward, then the short story as part of that literature is developing in the same direction. The greatest of all English writers declared through one of his characters that life is a walking shadow, a poor player; and through another, that man is the quintessence of dust. Yet in the same breath the second character exclaimed upon the nobility of man's reason, the infinitude of his faculty, and the godlikeness of his apprehension. In short, much depends upon the point of view.

Meantime, let the curtain rise on Burnett's gunman, on John's Big Annie, on Connelly's midgets, on Johnson's lion-tamer, on Cooper's Goliath, on Bradford's Luther and Steele's Delia and Mrs. Peterkin's Bubba, on Street's $17,500 lady, and on the softly stepping nuns of Elizabeth Madox Roberts—on these and the others who will provide entertainment. . . . O. Henry, who died just twenty years ago, would have liked at least some of the numbers of this Variety.

BLANCHE COLTON WILLIAMS.

New York City.
October 1, 1930.

DRESSING-UP

BY W. R. BURNETT

FROM *Harper's*

W. R. BURNETT

won a wide public with his first book "Little Cæsar," which lifted the Chicago gang wars into literature. He followed it with "Iron Man," a crisp, stark drama of the prize ring.

WHEN the store manager saw Blue and his girl, Birdy, coming in the front door, he turned to Al, one of the clerks, and said:

"Look at this, Al. The stockyards're moving downtown."

Al laughed, then he put on his best professional manner, clasped his hands in front of his stomach, inclined his head slightly, and walked up to Blue.

"What can I do for you, sir?"

Blue was short and stocky. His legs were thin, his waist small, but his shoulders were wide enough for a man six feet tall. His face was red and beefy, and his cheekbones were so prominent that they stuck out of his face. He looked up at Al.

"I'm buying an outfit, see," he said. "I'm gonna shed these rags and climb into something slick."

"Yes, sir," said Al. "How about one of our new spring models?"

"He wants a gray suit," said Birdy, adjusting her new fur neckpiece.

"Double-breasted," said Blue.

"Yes, sir," said Al.

"But first I want some silk underwear," said Blue. "I'm dressing from the hide out."

The store manager came over and smiled.

"Take good care of this young man, won't you, Mr. Johnson?"

"Yes, sir," said Al.

"Warm, isn't it?" the store manager said to Birdy.

"Yeah, ain't it?" said Birdy, taking off her neckpiece and dangling it over her arm like the women in the advertisements.

The store manager walked to the back of the shop and talked to the cashier:

"There's a boy that's got a big hunk of money all of a sudden," he said, "and he's gonna lose it the same way."

"Yeah?" said the cashier. "Well, I wish my rich uncle that I haven't got would die. Take a look at that neckpiece his girl's wearing. He didn't get that for five dollars."

Al spread out the silk underwear on the counter, and Blue looked through it. Birdy held up a lavender shirt.

"Here you are, Blue. Here's what you ought to get."

"Say . . . !" said Blue.

"Yes, sir," said Al; "we're selling lots of that. Just had an order for a dozen suits from Mr. Hibschmann out in Lake Forest."

"That's where the swells come from," said Birdy.

Blue looked at the lavender shirt and the lavender shorts and said:

"All right. I'll take a dozen."

Al glanced up from his order book, caught the manager's eye, and winked. The manager came up to Blue, put his hand on his shoulder and said:

"My dear sir, since you seem to know real stuff when you see it, I'll let you in on something. We got a new shipment of cravats that we have only just begun to unpack. But if you'd like to look at them, I'll send down to the stockroom for them."

"Sure," said Blue.

"Thanks awfully," said Birdy.

"It's our very best stock. Handmade cravats of the best material obtainable."

"We want the best, don't we, Blue?" said Birdy.

"Sure," said Blue.

While the manager sent for the cravats, Blue bought a dozen silk shirts, some collars, a solid gold collar pin, some onyx cuff links, a set of military brushes, and two dozen pairs of socks. Al bent over his order book and wrote in the items swiftly, computing the possible amount of this windfall. In a few minutes a stock boy brought up the neckties and stood with his mouth open while Blue selected a dozen of the most expensive ties. The manager noticed him.

"Just leave the rest of the stock, please," he said. Then he turned his back to Blue. "Get out of here!"

The stock boy went back to the basement, and the manager turned back to Blue, smiling.

"Those cravats retail at four dollars apiece," he said, "but because you're giving us such a nice order, I'll let you have them for three fifty."

"O.K.," said Blue.

"Them sure are swell ties, Blue," said Birdy, putting her arm through his. "Won't we be lit up though?"

"Sure," said Blue.

When the accessories had been selected, Blue began to try on the suits Al brought him. Blue strode up and down in front of the big triple mirror, puffed out his chest, struck attitudes, and studied his profile, which he had never seen except in one Bertillon picture. Al stayed at his elbow, offering suggestions, helping him with the set of a coat, telling him how wonderful he looked; and the manager stayed in the background, occasionally making a remark to Birdy whom he addressed as "Madam."

Blue, after a long consultation with Birdy, selected two of the most expensive suits: a blue serge single-breasted and a gray double-breasted. Then he bought a gray felt hat at twelve dollars, a small sailor at eight, and a panama at eighteen.

"Well," said Blue, "I guess you guys got about as much of my jack as you're gonna get."

"How about shoes?" Al put in.

"By God, I forgot," said Blue. "Hey, Birdy, I forgot shoes. Ain't that good? Look at this suitcase!"

He held up his foot. He was wearing big tan brogans, and there was a hole in the sole which went clear through the sock to the skin.

"Put your foot down, Blue,' said Birdy. "Where you think you're at?"

Blue bought a pair of tan oxfords, a pair of black oxfords, and a pair of white and tan sport shoes.

"Now we're done," said Blue. "I guess I ought to look pretty Boul' Mich' now."

Al totaled up the bill. Birdy and the manager had a long conversation about the weather; and Blue stood before the triple mirror studying his profile.

Al hesitated before he told Blue the amount of the bill. He called for the manager to O.K. it, then he said·

"Cash or charge, sir?"

Blue took out his billfold which was stuffed with big bills.

"Cash," he said, "how much?"

"Four hundred and sixty-five dollars," said Al.

Blue gave him five one-hundred-dollar bills.

"Now," said Blue, "I want you to get that gray suit fixed up right away so's I can put it on. I'm gonna dress from the hide out, and you guys can throw my old duds in the sewer."

"Yes, sir," said Al. "I'll get our tailor right away. We got a dressing room on the second floor."

The cashier rang up the sale and gave the change to the manager.

"Are you going away for the summer?" asked the manager as he handed Blue his change.

"Yeah," said Blue; "me and the girl friend are gonna see New York. It'll be our first trip."

"That'll be nice," said the manager. "Are you in business for yourself?"

Blue glanced at Birdy, and she shook her head slightly.

"I'm in the oil business," said Blue. "I got some wells. I'm from Oklahoma."

"That's interesting," said the manager.

When they were leaving the café Blue took out his billfold and gave the doorman a five-dollar bill. The doorman's eyes popped but he managed to bow and smile.

"Yes, sir, yes, sir," he said. "Do you want a cab?"

"Yeah," said Blue, hanging on to Birdy who was drunker than he was.

"Yeah, you're damn right we want a cab," said Birdy. "Do we look like the kind of people that walk?"

"That's right," said Blue.

"Yes, sir," said the doorman, and he went out into the middle of the street and blew his whistle.

Before the taxi came a small sedan drew up at the curb across the street, and two men got out.

"There he is," said one of them, pointing at Blue.

"Hello, Guido," shouted Blue. "Look at me. Ain't I Boul' Mich'?"

Guido ran across the street, took Blue by the arm, shook him several times and said:

"You got to sober up, keed! Get it! You got to sober up. Somebody spilled something, see? Me and Bud's taking it on the lam. Saint Louie won't look bad to us."

"Yellow," said Blue.

"Sure," said Guido, "but I got a stake and I'm gonna spend

some of it before I get bumped. Somebody wised Mike's boys up. They're looking for Pascal right now."

"What the hell!" said Blue, laughing. "Look at me, Guido. Ain't I Boul' Mich'? I got silk underwear under this suit. Look at Birdy."

"Look at me," said Birdy; "ain't I Boul' Mich'?"

"Say," said Guido, "you better ditch that tommy and put in with us. We got room in the heap."

"Not me," said Blue. "I ain't scairt of Mike Bova. I'll bump him next."

"All right," said Guido; "you'll have a swell funeral."

"Guido," called the other man, "let that bum go."

"So long, Blue," said Guido.

"So long," said Blue.

"Bye, bye, Guido," said Birdy.

Guido crossed the street, got into the driver's seat, slammed the door, and the sedan moved off. The taxi was waiting, and the doorman helped Birdy and Blue into it.

"Good-night, sir," said the doorman.

Birdy was lying on the lounge flat on her back with her hands under her head and an empty drinking glass sitting upright on her stomach. Blue, in his shirtsleeves, his collar wilted and his tie untied, was sitting at the table reading a crumpled newspaper. There were three-inch headlines.

BOVA'S LIEUTENANT KILLED
SHOT DOWN AS HE LEFT
HIS OFFICE BY GUNMEN

"You hear me!" said Blue. "Funniest thing ever pulled. There I was waiting in a room across the street trying to read a magazine, and Pascal was sitting with his head against the wall sleeping. 'Christ,' I says, 'there's Pete now.' He was coming out of his office. We wasn't looking for him for two hours yet. So I jist set there. Hell, I couldn't move, see, 'cause he come sudden, see, and I was figuring he wouldn't be out for two hours yet. 'Pascal,' I says, 'there's Pete now.' But Pascal he jist opens his eyes like a fish and don't say nothing. Pete he stops and looks right up at the window where

I'm sitting, see, and I wonder does this guy know something. Hell, I couldn't move. I wasn't ready, see? Well, so Pascal he slips and falls over and hits his head. This makes me laugh but still I couldn't move my trigger finger. Pete he holds out his hand like he's looking for rain, then I let him have it. I don't know. It was funny. I just let him have it without knowing it, see, and before, I couldn't pull that trigger when I wanted to. When the old Thompson starts to bark, Pascal gets up and yells, 'What you smoking for, you bum? It ain't time yet.' Then he looks out the window and there's Pete on the sidewalk dead as yesterday's newspaper and an old woman is pointing up at us. We ditch the gun and beat it down the back stairs. That's all there was to it. There wasn't nobody in the alley, see, so we jist walked along slow, and pretty soon we come to a drug-store and went in to get some cigs 'cause we smoked all ours waiting for that guy to come out."

"Pour me a little drink, honey," said Birdy.

Blue got up, took a big flask out of his hip pocket, and poured Birdy another drink. Then he sat down, took out his billfold and extracted a couple of railroad tickets.

"Look at them, old kid," he said. "When we ride, we ride. Twentieth Century to New York. That's us, kid; and won't we give 'em a treat over in Brooklyn! Say, them Easterners think we're still shooting Indians. Hell, Chi makes that place look like a Y. M. C. A. Yeah, I used to know Ruby Welch, and he was big stuff from Brooklyn; but what did he do when Guido started gunning for him? He got himself put in the can as a vag. Yeah, we ought to go big over in New York, kid. What they need over there is guts. We can give 'em that, kid. When somebody needs somebody for the No. 1 caper, Blue's the guy for the job. I was born with a rod in my cradle and I'm the best there is. Yeah, when the Big Boy wanted Pete bumped who did he call on first? Old Blue, yes, sir, old Blue."

Blue got up, turned on the gramophone, and started to dance with a chair.

"Hey," he said, "come on, let's dance, Birdy. We're big shots now, Birdy; let's dance. Look at me! If I had my coat on I'd look like the Prince of Wales. Boul' Mich', kid; that's us; Boul' Mich'. We'll knock their eyes out on Fifth Avenue, kid; yes, sir. Let's dance."

"I'm getting sick," said Birdy.

Blue went over and looked down at her. Her face was pale and drawn; there were blue circles under her eyes.

"Getting sick, Birdy?"

"Yeah. I can't stand it like I used to when I was with the Madam. Put me to bed, honey."

Blue picked Birdy up and carried her into the bedroom. Birdy began to hiccough.

"Gimme glass of water," she said.

"You don't want water," Blue said; "you want a nice big slug."

"No, gimme glass of water."

She lay down on the bed and, before Blue could bring her a glass of water, she was asleep. He stood looking down at her, then he went back into the living room, took a long pull at his flask, and picked up the crumpled newspaper. But he had read the account of the killing of Big Pete so many times that he knew it by heart. He sat staring at the paper, then he threw it on the floor and sat rolling a cigarette between his palms.

It had begun to get light. He heard a milk wagon passing the house. He got up and went over to the window. The houses were still dark, and far off down the street a string of lighted elevated cars ran along the horizon, but the sky was gray and in the east some of the clouds were turning yellow. It was quiet. Blue began to notice how quiet it was.

"Birdy," he called.

But he heard her snoring, and turned back to the table.

The telephone rang, but when he answered it there was nobody on the line.

"What's the idea?" he said.

He sat down at the table, took out his billfold and counted his money, then he took out the railroad tickets and read everything printed on them. Again he noticed how quiet it was. He got up, put away his billfold, and went into the bedroom. Birdy was sleeping with her mouth open, flat on her back, with her arms spread out. Blue lay down beside her and tried to sleep, but he turned from side to side, and finally gave it up.

"I don't feel like sleeping," he thought. "I'm all het up about going East on the Century. Here I am, old Blue, riding

the Century dressed up like John Barrymore and with a swell frail. Yeah, that's me. Boul' Mich' Blue."

He got up, put on his coat, and began to pose in front of the living-room mirror.

"Boul' Mich' Blue," he said.

Finally he sat down at the table and laid out a game of solitaire; but he had so many bad breaks with the cards that he began to cheat and then lost interest in the game.

"I know," he said, "what I need is food."

He got up and went to the refrigerator, but there wasn't anything in it except a few pieces of cold meat.

"Hell!" he said, "I guess I'll have to go down to Charley's."

He put on his new soft hat, but hesitated. If they was looking for Pascal, they was looking for him, too. Right now there wasn't nobody on the streets and it was a good time to bump a guy.

"Hell!" he said, buttoning his coat, "I got a streak of luck. It'll hold. Boul' Mich' Blue'll be on the Century to-morrow. Yeah bo! I ain't scairt of no Mike Bova."

When Blue came out of the apartment house the sun was just coming up. The alleys and areaways were still dark, but there was a pale yellow radiance in the streets. There was no one about; no sign of life. Not even a parked car.

"Hell!" said Blue; "safe as a tank town."

A window across the street was raised, and Blue ducked without meaning to; but a fat woman put her head out of the window and stared into the street.

There was nobody in Charley's, not even a waiter. Behind the counter the big nickel coffee urns were sending up steam. Blue took out a fifty-cent piece and flung it on the counter. Wing, the counterman, looked in from the kitchen.

"Come on, Wing," said Blue, "snap it up."

"Didn't know you, kid," said Wing. "Ain't you dressed up, though? Must've struck it."

"I sure did," said Blue. "Give me a combination and some muddy water."

"Muddy water, hell," said Wing. "I jist made that Java."

Blue leaned on the counter and stared at himself in the mirror, while Wing went back to make his sandwich.

"Hey, Wing," Blue shouted, "did you know I was going East on the Century?"

"Are, hunh?" Wing shouted back. "You're on the big time now, ain't you, kid?"

"That's the word," said Blue.

Blue turned to look out into the street. He saw a man passing, and stared at him. The man was small and had a slouch hat pulled down over his face. Blue thought he recognized him and slid his gun out of the holster under his armpit and put it in his coat pocket. The man passed without looking in.

"I got the jumps," said Blue. "It's that rotten gin."

Wing came in with the sandwich, drew Blue a cup of coffee, then leaned his elbows on the counter and watched Blue eat.

"Well," said Wing, "I see where they got Big Pete."

"Yeah," said Blue.

"I knew they was gonna," said Wing. "I got inside dope."

"Yeah?" said Blue.

"It was coming to him."

"Yeah."

Blue finished his sandwich, lighted a cigarette, and sipped his coffee. It was broad daylight now, and trucks had begun to pass the restaurant.

"Going East, are you, kid?" said Wing.

"Yeah," said Blue. "I got in on a big cut and I don't have to worry none for some time. I just took my dame down and dressed her up this afternoon. Is she hot? Me, I got silk underwear on."

He unbuttoned his shirt and showed Wing his lavender underwear.

"You're sure a dressed-up boy," said Wing. "I bet you paid ten bucks for that hat you got on."

"Twelve," said Blue. "It was the best they had. I paid eighteen for a panama. You like this suit?"

"It's red hot," said Wing; then with a twinge of envy, "If I wasn't going straight maybe I could wear rags like that."

"How long's your parole got to run yet?"

"Plenty long. And I got the dicks down on me. They thought I'd stool for 'em in this ward. But that ain't my way."

"Why don't you make a break for Canada?"

"Yeah," said Wing, "and get jerked back to stir."

Blue finished his coffee, paid his check, and gave Wing a dollar bill. Wing turned the bill over and over.

"Say," he said, "give me another buck and I'll put you on to something hot at Arlington."

Blue laughed and tossed Wing a silver dollar.

"Never mind the tip," he said. "I know lots of better ways to lose my dough. Why don't you lay off the ponies, Wing? You can't beat that racket."

"I got the itch," said Wing.

Blue looked into the mirror and adjusted his hat to the proper angle.

"Well," he said, "I'm leaving you. I'll send you a postcard from the Big Burg, Wing."

But Blue noticed that Wing had begun to get nervous; his face was twitching.

"Blue," said Wing, "for Christ's sake watch your step. I'm telling you straight, kid. One of Mike's boys was in here buzzing me about you jist 'fore she began to get light. I'm telling you straight, kid. It ain't my fight and I wasn't gonna peep. But you're a right guy, Blue."

Blue rubbed his hand over his face, then he said:

"It was the Wolf. I seen him go past."

"Yeah," said Wing.

"Jesus!" said Blue, "which way'd I better go?"

"I'd put you upstairs . . ." Wing began.

"No use," said Blue. "The Wolf seen me."

Wing drew himself a cup of coffee and drank it at a gulp.

"If they knew I'd peeped they'd bump me sure," said Wing.

Blue stood staring at the counter, then he pulled his hat down over his eyes, and slipped his right hand into the pocket where the gun was.

"Well," he said, "the alley's no good. It's blind my way. The side street won't get me no place. So all I got's the front way. Hell!" he went on, puffing out his chest, "I got a streak of luck, Wing. It'll hold."

Wing drew himself another cup of coffee.

"Here's hoping," he said.

Blue went to the door and, putting his head out a little way, looked up and down. The street was deserted except for a

truck which was coming toward him slowly. It was a Standard Oil truck.

"Wing," he said, "has any of Mike's boys got a hide-out anywhere around here?"

"Don't know of none."

"Well," said Blue, "here I go."

"So long," said Wing.

Blue stepped out of the restaurant, threw his shoulders back, and began to walk slowly toward Birdy's apartment. The Standard Oil truck passed him and went on. The street was quiet. At the end of the street he saw an elevated on its way toward the Loop.

"I wish I was on that baby," he said.

But the nearer he got to the apartment the surer he became that his luck would hold. Hell! it was the first break he'd had since he and Guido hijacked that big Detroit shipment. He had tickets on the Century. When a guy has tickets on the Century he uses them. And that wasn't all. He was a big shot now; the Big Boy had promised him a bonus; he had on silk underwear.

"Hell!" said Blue, "it ain't in the cards."

Across from Birdy's apartment he saw the same fat woman leaning out of the window. When he looked up she drew her head in hastily. Blue made a dash for the door, but across the street a Thompson gun began to spit. Blue stumbled, dropped his gun, and ran blindly out into the middle of the street; then he turned and ran blindly back toward the house. An iron fence caught him just below the belt and he doubled over it. Across the street a window was slammed.

NEITHER JEW NOR GREEK

BY WILLIAM M. JOHN

FROM THE *Century*

WILLIAM M. JOHN

has been occupied with his Colorado ranches and farms in the Tumbleweed Valley of which he writes, and it is but recently that he has found the leisure to translate into fiction the characters in his own corner of the real West.

UNCLE ASY MULBERRY threw back his head and expressed his skepticism with a laugh that was a cross between a chuckle and a whinny.

No, no—he said—you don't believe what you're sayin'. You may think you do, but you don't know your own mind. I ain't doubtin' the truth of your statement; it's as true as gospel. But when a man, and more particularly a woman, says to me, "We're all alike. Everybody's one under the skin," I know right off they haven't stopped to consider what they are talkin' about.

I've heard folks make that remark, in one form or another, off and on, for over seventy years; ever since I was old enough to be interested in what the other fellow was sayin'. Long before the institution you're leanin' against graduated out of the Feed and Livery class into a first-rate Automobile and Accessory business, neighbors and customers would drift in for a snack of small talk, and many's the time I've had 'em say to me, "Asy, you can't get away from it, we're all human, and bein' all human, we're all heir to the same faults and the same virtues."

Well, them are sentiments that would do credit to anybody, but here's the hitch: when you come to find out who the man or woman's referrin' to in such a brotherly or sisterly fashion, it's pretty sure to be somebody they don't know much about, or that they think is a mite better than they are.

Don't I recollect the stirrin' sermon Brother Millsap preached the one and only time Big Annie attended divine services here in the Hopeville Baptist Church? Don't I recollect the amount of brotherly and sisterly feelin' displayed at the close of that service? If I'd never seen it worked out before or since, that was enough to prove to me how much store most folks put in the "We're all alike" idea. About all the education you ever need in this life is to learn to watch the average man and woman when they're just bein' themselves.

At the time Ike Bowan married Big Annie and brought her down here in Tumbleweed Valley to live, she was one

of Miss May's steady girls. Miss May run the biggest and best house on Santa Fe Avenue, up in Dawson. A house of ill-repute it would be called now, I reckon, since the general wave of reform has swept over the country. But in them days our leadin' bankers and lawyers and cattlemen used to rub shoulders in Miss May's parlor, and nobody seemed to think much about it. I don't suppose there was a farmer or ranchman in the valley, that amounted to anything, who Big Annie couldn't call by his first name and not feel she was bein' overly intimate in doin' it.

There was some that said they couldn't understand why Ike married Big Annie, but that was never a mystery to me. Ike had run away from home, down in Texas, when he was nine years old and followed a trail herd north as far as Colorado. He'd been battered and knocked 'round, never knowin' a woman's lovin' care, for more than forty years, so when he found one that would have him, he was smart enough not to let the opportunity slip. He was short and weazened, had a cast in one eye, and if he ever got all the tobacco juice out of his beard at one time, I never happened to be 'round on that occasion.

What I couldn't understand was, why did Big Annie ever marry Ike? It may have been she had made up her mind to retire from active business and Ike was the first gate that opened on her lane, or it may have been that she was suddenly seized with a desire to become an honest woman in the eyes of the world. I ain't sayin' which, but I do know that no woman ever tried harder than Big Annie did to make her husband comfortable and happy, durin' the two years that Ike lived, after they was married.

Annie was big. Six feet tall, I reckon, and broad. Her hair was a light sorrel, and her profession hadn't hardened her blue eyes the way it does some women's. She was different, in one way at least, from most of the women in her trade—she was thrifty, kept most everything she got her hands on. Some said Big Annie owned a half interest in Miss May's house when she married Ike. Anyway, Ike added a hundred good white-faced cows to his herd the month after he brought Annie home. And I recollect, some years before that, hearin' Butch Gooch say, "George Stevens was blowin' himself up at Miss

May's last night. Big Annie had her rope on him. I'll bet he comes home without his shirt."

But Big Annie must of made up her mind to bury her past, and thought that other folks would be willin' to help her shovel the dirt in on it, for the second Sunday, after she landed in our midst, she walked into the Baptist Church and set down up front beside Lize Sharp, just as Brother Millsap was windin' up the announcements for the mornin'.

The men twisted their necks most off, tryin' to get a better view from their side of the church, and the women on Big Annie's side developed an epidemic of weak lungs, quicker than I ever seen it done before.

Brother Millsap stared at Big Annie as if he was witnessin' one of them miracles bein' performed he'd preached so much about. Then he coughed a couple of times himself and added a special exhortation to the women.

"Dip your hands deep into your lard pails," he roared. "Spare not your spices, cook liberally and your best, for when you cook for our big sociable to be held next Friday evening, you are preparin' for the Lord. Our organ is in bad shape. We have all prayed earnestly, but prayer without works availeth nothin'. Come early, bring plenty of food, ask all your friends. Let us make it a feast of good-fellowship. The cost of this glorious meal will be twenty-five cents for adults and fifteen cents for children."

Then, with a hitch at his white necktie, he opened the big Bible on the pulpit and begun the cheerin' message he'd prepared.

"Sisters and Brethern," he said, "I've chosen for my text this mornin' the twenty-eighth verse of the third chapter of Galatians."

I ain't up on the Bible, the way Ma is, but I can remember every word of that verse as plain as if Brother Millsap was standin' right here in front of us now, readin' it in that low, sanctimonious voice he used when he was in the pulpit. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female· for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

I reckon he'd of switched to some other subject if he'd had time, but Big Annie sort of took him by surprise, so to speak. He'd worked hard on that sermon, you could see that as he

went along. He didn't stop with the one verse, but quoted more than half the Scriptures in his effort to prove how near we all come to bein' cut off the same pattern, in the eyes of God. He mentioned Mary Magdalene and several other right prominent folks who happened along at the time the Bible was set down. Before he finished, you was about convinced that Jesus was the first Democrat.

Big Annie never took her eyes off of Brother Millsap once while he was speakin'. She leaned forward and grasped the back of the bench in front of her with her big white cotton gloves, as if she was afraid she wouldn't catch every word he said. I 'low Big Annie had never been in any church before. It sort of surprised her, maybe, to find how helpful a sermon can be, if you happen to hit the kind suited to your needs.

Brother Millsap brought his talk to a close, with, "Carry this lesson through the week, next to your hearts, Sisters and Brethern. Treat your fellow-man as Jesus would have treated him. For remember, we are all one in Christ Jesus."

Big Annie stepped out into the aisle, after the benediction, flushed and beamin' like a child. Brother Millsap brushed past her to take his stand at the door for the handshakin'. But not another soul looked her way. Them of the men who had handkerchiefs was payin' strict attention to their noses. The women nearest the aisle turned their backs, plumb preoccupied in pickin' up their belongin's or chattin' with the women nearest them. Big Annie, head high, eyes bright, marched to the door alone. As I said, she could of called 'most any man in the gatherin' by his first name, but she didn't even nod to one of 'em.

She stopped at the door and held her hand out to the parson. "If that's what preachin's like, I'm for it," she boomed.

Brother Millsap turned an apple-red and stuttered, "We're —we're glad to have you with us this mornin', Mrs. Bowan, I hope you'll come again."

"I will," she says. "And I'm comin' to your sociable and bring my share of the grub." Then she stalked on out, untied her horse and drove away.

The tables was set outside, the night of the sociable. Some of the boys had cleared off a patch of sagebrush in front of

the church and leveled up the ground. Most of the women were gathered 'round a small table where the food was bein' heaped as it arrived.

Big Annie was a little late in gettin' there. I seen her drive in, jump out of the buggy and tie her horse. Then she took what looked like a bread-board covered with a white cloth out of the back of her rig and walked to where the women was gathered.

It was a late May evenin' and the sun was just settin' in the crotch between the Spanish Peaks, yonder. Big Annie looked like a pink giant splotched with gold paint, she was that much bigger than most of the others. She laid the board on the table and uncovered three of the brownest, crispest pies it's ever been my pleasure to clap an eye on to. They may have smelt a bit too strong of the cup that cheers to be exactly suitable for a Baptist sociable, but my mouth waters to this day when I think of 'em.

"They're mince," she says.

The women melted away from Big Annie like sin before the wrath of the righteous; all but old lady Parsons, who was president and actin' manager of the Ladies' Aid at that time. Old lady Parsons took one good squint at them pies, then, with the back of her left hand, she shoved 'em off the table into a box of trash that was settin' beside it. "They ain't fit for hog food," she says, loud enough to be heard all over the lot.

Big Annie backed away a step or two, and her face got redder than the natural rays of the sun was paintin' it. Brother Millsap dodged into the church, no doubt to get somethin' he'd forgot to bring out, and the rest of us present just held our breath and waited for developments.

Big Annie picked up the board the pies had been on—she was still holdin' the white rag in her hand—and turned toward where her horse was tied. She stopped for a minute on her way to the buggy, looked us all over well and smiled. I've wondered many a time since whether Big Annie had seen enough of life to know that she might have done what old lady Parsons did if she had been in her place, or whether she had a sort of presentiment of what was goin' to happen a couple of years later and was takin' a bit of her pleasure in advance.

I don't have to tell you that that ended the Hopeville Baptist Church as far as Big Annie was concerned. Ike's health started failin' along in the summer and she spent most of her time with him, ridin' out lookin' after the cattle or decidin' what they'd have the Mexican help do. She was a heap of satisfaction to Ike, he told me so himself, a few months before he died.

Big Annie didn't have but one woman friend in the valley, and that woman was Clarence Shy's wife. Mrs. Shy was the helpless kind, that a smile or a friend meant a lot to. Ike Bowan's place laid on the other side of the river, on top of that bluff you see yonder, the south bank of the stream; but Shy's land was on this side, just across the creek from Ike's.

Clarence had inherited better than fifteen hundred acres from his pa, one of the first men to settle in the valley, a hard-drinkin', hard-fightin', money-gettin' old-timer. But by the time Big Annie was thrust upon us, as you might say, folks had worked Shy out of all but about a hundred acres. He wasn't any more like his pa than a rabbit's like a coyote. The Bible says the meek shall inherit the earth, but if you've ever noticed, you can't catch the Book up on one of its own statements. It don't say a word about how long the meek will keep the earth after they get it. Clarence was one of the meek, and he and his wife made a perfect matched team. They had four children who were like their parents both in body and spirit.

Big Annie took the Shy family under wing; sewed for the kids, put up preserves for Mrs. Shy, and told Clarence when to plant and when to harvest his crops. His land, what he had left of it, was good, and he had plenty of water. His pa built the first ditch on the river. The old man was far-sighted. He knew the land would never be worth much without the water.

With Big Annie to manage for him, Clarence begun to get ahead; paid off some of his debts and had a little money left over to live on. But prosperity is a right dangerous thing, at times. George Stevens looked over Shy's crops in the fall, and said, "Huh, we could all grow crops like them, if we had the water."

That was the beginnin' of the Tumbleweed Valley irrigation ditch. George persuaded a dozen or so of the other ranchers on this side of the river to throw in with him. They

built a dam up above Shy's and took out a big ditch. That left Clarence high and dry, except at flood time. And if you know anything about irrigation, you know flood time ain't when you need the water the most.

If Ike hadn't died that fall, Big Annie would of probably figured out some way for Clarence to stop Stevens and his gang from stealin' the water. But after Ike took to his bed for the last time, Big Annie never left his room only to bring him things to make him easier.

I recollect the day Ike died. I was helpin' the Mexican lay adobes in this very wall you're leanin' against, when Big Annie drove up and motioned for me to come out. Me and Ma was livin' in that one room adobe on the back of the lot, at the time, and I had the rigs and horses I was fixin' to start my livery stable with, housed in a frame shed.

"Asy," Big Annie said, "Ike died this mornin'."

"I'm sorry to hear it, Annie," I says. "Is there anything I can do?"

"Well," she says, "maybe there is and maybe there ain't. Ike never was in a church in his life, but he was as good a man as ever wore boots. I've a hankerin' to give him a church burial. What do you think them buzzards would say if I asked for the loan of their church to bury Ike out of?"

"Annie," I says, "if I'd been born with the power to foretell the future, instead of bein' the ornery, no-account cuss I am, even then I'd hesitate to say; I'd rather bet on the weather than most folks I know. Let's drive over and have a talk with Brother Millsap."

I could tell, right away Brother Millsap wasn't hopeful. He said, "Mrs. Bowan, I'll be glad to preach the service and do everything I can, but—but as to usin' the church, that's a matter for the elders to decide." He glanced out of the window and I seen his face brighten. "There comes Amos Thompson this way. He's one of the elders. I'll go ask him," he says, jumpin' for the door.

His face had lost its cheerful look when he got back from talkin' to Amos. "Mrs. Bowan," he says, "Mr. Thompson don't like to decide a question of that nature without callin' a meetin' of the elders. Can I let you know later?"

Big Annie's shoulders squared. "I see how it is, parson," she says. "They've got to find out for sure that Ike wasn't

neither a Jew nor a Greek. I don't believe we'd better put off havin' the funeral till they get through decidin'. If you'll let Mr. Mulberry drive you over to the ranch, day after tomorrow, we'll do the thing in a quiet way."

If it hadn't been for Mrs. Shy havin' to let her baby nurse every five minutes to keep it quiet, Ike's funeral would of been one of the nicest I ever attended. There was no outsider present, except Brother Millsap and myself and the Shy family. We buried Ike on the bluff overlookin' the river. As we was throwin' on the last of the dirt, Big Annie glanced across the stream and seen George Stevens and the rest of 'em, workin' like prairie-dogs on the new ditch.

"What's that gang doin' over there?" she asked, catchin' hold of Clarence's arm.

"I heard somebody say they was buildin' a ditch," Clarence said, pattin' the earth with his shovel.

"That's a funny idea," Big Annie says, and we all started for the house.

Irrigatin' time was here, before Big Annie realized what the new ditch had done to Clarence. When he went to turn the water into his ditch the stream was dry, but the big ditch above him was runnin' bankfull.

I reckon Big Annie did it, or stood by and told Clarence how to do it, for the next mornin' there was a hole cut in the new ditch and all the water was runnin' back into the river.

Amos Thompson and George Stevens rode up to see Clarence. He was out in the alfalfa, spreadin' the water.

"Shy," Thompson roared, "you cut our ditch last night, and if you ever set foot on the bank again, we'll throw you in jail for life."

Clarence wiped the mud off his shovel handle. "I've always had the water to use," he says.

"We've filed on this water accordin' to the laws of Colorado," Stevens put in. "It ain't our funeral if you've been asleep all these years, and if you can't farm without water, you'd better move off and find you another place."

I 'low that's exactly what Shy would of done, too, if it hadn't been for Big Annie. 'Course, he really owned what water he'd used, accordin' to law. But as I say, he was one of the meek. Big Annie's education had been limited to dealin'

direct with mankind, so she wasn't up on legal matters. The only way she knew to fight was to cut the ditch, which she did or had Clarence do, the very next night.

The other side knew they was stealin' Shy's water, so they wasn't over anxious to drag him into court, for fear some smart lawyer would get hold of him and tie a knot in their scheme. Thompson and Stevens threatened some more but they didn't have Clarence arrested. Instead, they hired José Marufo, a burly, pock-marked Mexican, to guard the ditch nights.

Marufo hadn't been on the job more than a week till he turned up missin' one sunshiny mornin', and there was no water in the new ditch. When George Stevens rode up to the headgate to see what was the matter, he found the bank cut again, and Marufo's body, all sieved with buckshot. lyin' in a clump of willows, not fifty feet further on.

Well, I reckon there wasn't a person of thinkin' age in the valley who believed Clarence Shy killed Marufo. Clarence wasn't the kind of a man to kill anything. He even hired somebody to come do the butcherin' for him when he happened to have a hog or a heifer fat enough to slaughter. But every last man interested in the new ditch swore he knew for a fact that Shy done the shootin'.

There's nothin' much more annoyin' than to have somebody standin' in your way when you're tryin' to steal somethin', and that was the fix the Tumbleweed Valley Ditch Company was in. The quicker they got rid of Clarence, the quicker they could go about their thievin' unmolested. They had the sheriff down from Dawson to arrest Shy before the sun set that evenin', and persuaded Judge Beck to lay all other matters aside in order to try the nefarious murderer at once.

The trial was short and to the point, as you might say. The court-room was packed; 'most all of Tumbleweed Valley had come into Dawson to see justice meted out.

Clarence made as poor a witness in his own behalf as the opposin' side could of asked for. He confessed to cuttin' the ditch twice before, but denied killin' Marufo and breakin' the bank the night the Mexican was shot.

Mrs. Shy got on the stand and said, "It—it couldn't of been Clarence. He—he went to bed at the same time I did

the night of—the—the night it happened." And when the prosecutin' attorney asked her how she knew he didn't get up later to go out and shoot Marufo, she turned an alkali-white, and stuttered, "I—I couldn't be sure. But I'm a light sleeper, on account of havin' to be up with the children so much, and I'm—I'm almost positive I'd of felt him get out of bed."

Big Annie set in the court-room every minute the trial was goin' on. She wore the black dress she'd bought when Ike died, and all the curl was combed out of her yellow hair. She'd look at Clarence and shake her head when he'd say somethin' on the stand that was hurtin' his case. He'd glance at her, then turn away quick, as if he was afraid.

The prosecutin' attorney made what come pretty near bein' a fatal mistake; he called Big Annie as his last witness. "Mrs. Bowan," he says, "you've been a close neighbor of the defendant for some time. Have you ever heard him say anything which would lead you to believe he was not on friendly terms with the deceased, José Marufo?"

Big Annie slapped her hands down on the arms of the witness-chair, and her eyes blazed. "If you mean," she shouted, "do I think Clarence Shy shot that worthless Mexican? No! And what's more, there ain't a man in this room who knows Shy, that believes it either, if they'd tell the truth."

"That'll do," says the attorney, and Big Annie stomped down off the stand.

Judge Beck made quite a speech on the evils of lettin' greed force you into acts you would afterwards repent of, when he sentenced Clarence. He finished by sayin', "Clarence Shy, you have been found guilty of murder in the first degree by a jury of twelve men. The court has the power to sentence you to life imprisonment at hard labor. But because this is your first offence, and when you enter the prison gates you are leavin' a wife and four children, the court is goin' to show the maximum leniency. I sentence you to hard labor in the penitentiary for twenty years."

When Judge Beck said, "twenty years," Big Annie rose up from the bench where she was settin', her mouth opened and closed, then she sank back without makin' a sound.

Her face was drawn and haggard when she shook Shy's hand, before they led him back into jail. "I'll look after the

Missus and kids the best I can, Clarence, while you're away," I heard her say.

And I says to myself, "Well, Annie, you've got a family on your hands for the rest of your life, for they'd better hang a man like Clarence Shy and be done with it, than to send him up for twenty years. He won't last five."

The trial was about the middle of May, and I reckon Big Annie put in one of the busiest summers of her life from then on until fall, runnin' her own place and lookin' after the Shys. She come over to Billy Debusk's store on an average of twice a week to buy provisions, shoes for the kids and cloth to make 'em clothes.

I was busy roofin' this buildin', buildin' stalls for the horses and one thing and another. Sometimes when Big Annie would be passin', I'd yell and ask how things was movin' along; that is, if Ma wasn't anywheres 'round.

"We're makin' it," she'd call back, happy as a hen that's found herself a brood of chicks.

By September, I'd almost quit wonderin' about Clarence's family. Other folks' troubles have a way of slippin' out of your mind, easy-like. But one mornin' Big Annie pulled her horse to a stop right in front of the barn.

"Asy," she says, "we're havin' a hell of a time at Shy's. Three of the children are down with scarlet fever, and Mrs. Shy's in bed, expectin' another baby any day."

"That's tough, Annie," I says. "What do you suggest?"

"Money and somebody to help nurse," she snapped. "Somethin's got to be done."

"Well," I says, "they're havin' a harvest sociable at the church to-night. Crops have been good under the new ditch. I'll try takin' up a collection and you can count on me for twenty-five dollars."

"That's a grand idea, Asy. I'll count on your help," she says, chuckin' her horse into a trot.

That afternoon I told Ma I was ridin' out to look for a matched team, bein' about ready to open the livery-stable full force. But instead, I rode up the river to Shy's place. If I was goin' to make a plea for aid that evenin', I figured as how I ought to be an eyewitness to the misery.

The fences on the Shy place was down and Amos Thomp-

son's cattle was trompin' the fields into dust. The adobes was showin' through the plasterin' on the house, as if it had just come through a hard case of smallpox.

Big Annie answered the door when I knocked. She was carryin' the youngest child in her arms, a baby less than two years old. The tears was streamin' down Big Annie's face like April rain. She stood there, shakin' her head without sayin' a word. Then she leaned over and kissed the baby. "It's dead!" she sobbed. "That gang killed it."

After a minute or two she straightened up and said, "You've got to go in and tell her, Asy, I can't."

Well, sir, by the time I landed at the sociable that night, I was so het up over the way the Shys had been treated, I was ready to go through the crowd with a gun and take their money away from them.

Brother Millsap suggested that we'd all go into the church and open the festivities with a prayer of thanks.

"When he gets through prayin'," I says to myself, "will be a good time for me to begin on 'em about the Shys."

He prayed at length, as most preachers do. He asked divine guidance for all the known races, singly and united. As I recollect, the Eskimo was the only one he overlooked. He advised the Lord as to their needs and how best to handle them. He mentioned the weather and suggested the kind most acceptable at that time. He thanked the Lord for bein' so generous with the farmers in the valley; told the Lord how we all appreciated the smile of His approval, and how hard we'd struggled to make ourselves worthy of His kindness and mercy and bountiful blessin's. He went on till I reckon there wasn't a person in the church, except myself, who didn't feel like their harp and halo was hangin' on the bench right in front of 'em.

As he breathed a fervent "Amen," I got to my feet and was in the act of clearin' my throat, when I heard somebody stridin' down the aisle. I glanced out the corner of my eye and seen Big Annie. Big Annie in a flamin' red dress, wearin' a whole garden of red poppies on her head, and carryin' a white sack under her arm. She couldn't of been redder, if she'd been the original pillar of fire.

She marched straight on to the platform, elbowed Brother

Millsap to one side, and slapped down her sack, square on the big Bible.

"Christians," she says, without takin' time to catch her breath, "I've come here this evenin' to raise some money for the Shy family. They're in desperate need, and it'll take about five hundred dollars to see 'em through."

"I'll swan, you could almost see the walls of the church sway out and in, the folks settin' there was breathin' that hard.

"I've always made my own way," Big Annie went on, "ever since I can remember, and I ain't never asked anybody for a cent I didn't earn. So I ain't come here to beg off of you this evenin'. As most of the men in the audience know, I've been a savin' woman, and it's part of my savin's I've brought along with me." She touched the bag layin' on the Bible and stopped long enough to look us all over good.

"I've got what I call my keepsakes in that bag," she said. "Hat bands, silk shirts, a scatterin' of playin' cards, a letter or two, odds and ends too numerous to mention. But some place on every one of 'em is the name of the party who donated the gift, and in many instances there's a brief sentiment scratched above the name. These keepsakes are dear to me, for they remind me of the days when I had so many friends who were anxious to help me get along in the world. But I'm goin' to offer every one of 'em for sale to-night, auction 'em off to the highest bidders, in order to raise money for Mrs. Shy and her children."

George Stevens shuffled to his feet in the back of the church and took a step toward the door, lookin' as straight down his nose, as a man with a broken nose can.

"Set down, George," Big Annie yelled and George set down. "I wouldn't like to have you miss this sale. It'll be interestin'. But before we begin the auction, I think it's only fair to call on, say twelve of the most influential men here this evenin'. Some, or all of 'em, might be hankerin' to give as much as fifty dollars apiece, and me not know it. If that was the case, I might not have to part with all my keepsakes. Understand, though, I ain't askin' for the money to be donated. I'm here and ready to sell the last thing in that bag, if it's necessary."

She unfolded a piece of paper she had in her hand and held it off from her, as if she was tryin' to make out what was on it.

"Amos Thompson," Big Annie read.

"I give fifty dollars for the good of the cause," Amos shouted.

"Well done, brother," she said, imitatin' Brother Millsap to a T. "The next name appears to be George Stevens."

"Fifty for me, too," George groaned.

Big Annie went on down the list; Butch Gooch, Lipe Standard, Bruce East, Eli Jefferson, twelve of 'em, and every one of 'em donated the same amount. The walls of that church actually sprung three inches from the sigh of relief that was exhaled when she got through with her list.

The men started shufflin' their feet, gettin' ready to make a break for air, but Big Annie held up her hand and said, "Just a minute. I've got a couple of other little matters I want to call to your attention, before the meetin' adjourns. I know there's not a person in this church who believes that Clarence Shy shot José Marufo. That bein' the case, it won't strain your sense of justice or hurt your standin' as good Christians to do what I'm goin' to ask you."

She reached down into her bosom and pulled out a couple of papers. Her dress was cut low in front, and she brought 'em forth with a flourish.

"I got a lawyer in Dawson to write these papers for me," she said, holdin' 'em out in front of her, careful-like, "when I seen how bad off Mrs. Shy and her babies was gettin', so they're legal. One of 'em is a request for a pardon for Clarence Shy, and the lawyer says he'll have Clarence out of the pen inside of thirty days, if everybody who testified against him will sign it. The other paper is a deed to Shy for a fifth interest in that fine new ditch you've built. The deed's legal too. Step up, gentlemen. I know you'll all want to sign. The drinks are on the house."

A silence louder than a whole army of brass bands hung over that huddled bunch of church members for a minute. Then Big Annie reached out and touched the sack which was layin' on the Bible. If a bolt of lightnin' had struck the buildin', them men couldn't of been on their feet quicker, or struggled harder to reach the pulpit.

After everybody had signed up in full, and Big Annie was makin' her way out, she motioned to me to come too. I followed her 'round to the side of the church.

"Asy," she says, "there's somethin' on my mind that's troublin' me a lot. I want your advice."

"I don't own nothin' that I give as cheerful, Annie," I says.

"Well," she says, "I know who killed José Marufo. It was a Mexican girl by the name of Rafelita Montoya. She's livin' in an adobe shack on my place, now, and José's the father of her baby. She confessed to me because I've been helpin' her to get enough to eat. Do you think it's my duty to turn her over to the law?"

"Annie," I says, "it's always been my plan to let sleepin' dogs take their rest; if they didn't need it, they wouldn't be sleepin'."

"Thanks a lot, Asy, for them comfortin' words. That's the way I feel about it, too," she says, and started for her rig. Then she stopped, come back and chuckled in my ear, "And, Asy, I want to tell you that that there Bible book has got things down pretty pat. We're all alike, neither Jew nor Greek, free or tied up, when we get in a tight place. I ain't got a thing in this bag but some old rags and a strap or two." And she patted the sack under her arm.

THE SACRIFICE OF THE MAIDENS

BY ELIZABETH MADOX ROBERTS

FROM *Letters* (University of Kentucky)

ELIZABETH MADOX ROBERTS

is one of the most significant figures in contemporary literature. "The Time of Man" and "The Great Meadow" are written with an instinct for beauty and a stylistic perfection that rank them high among modern novels.

AN UNNATURAL dusk lay among the pillars of the little chapel and the candle-glow struggled with the white of the late daylight that came through the windows. Felix Barbour walked along the aisle beside Lester, his brother, and sat in a pew which a nun, who acted as usher, had already pointed out for his sister, Piety. Outside he heard the crying of the crickets and a shrill pulse of frogs that lived about the pond in the field beyond the convent park. Inside were other sounds which were more near and more full of power, the sounds made by a gathering of many people who were hushed to quiet, whose garments whispered softly as limbs were settled, as knees left the prayer-stools, as heads were bowed or lifted. The sounds without and those within mingled continually, but the whispers of a throng of bodies worked free of the cries that came from the outer wet and the grass.

The strangeness of the little chapel, a chapel for the worship of nuns, put a strangeness over his sense of himself as being present, as being a part of the praying throng. The seat seemed small and scarcely sufficient for his large strong limbs as he crumpled himself to rest there, and his bulk seemed awkward on the prayer-stool. That night his sister, Anne, would take the first vows which would make her a nun of the Dominican Order, and he had come now to witness the strange ceremony. He had known in a vague and troubled way that this would be the end of Anne. This knowing dispersed now under the strangeness of the chapel, under the temporary cramping posture of his limbs, as if the old way would be restored when he stretched himself to his stature and walked again into the outer air. Anne had come home from the convent school during the Easter vacation to tell those at home that she would take the vows. Sitting beside the fire, she had risen suddenly, flinging back from the doorway as she stood in the act of going:

"I aim to take the vows, to live the holy life. I aim . . . That's my intention . . ."

This was followed by a hush that settled over the house broken by their father's awkward protest and then his silent acceptance. Now a warm breath spread over the chapel, the breath of a multitude of men brought together to act as one being. All the congregation had begun to chant the Rosary in recitative, all standing. The priest in the altar would begin, half singing, but on a word, a Word, the congregation would break over him, covering his voice with a rush of acclamation and petition, the whole making a spoken fugue, the many-ply voice of the congregation speaking all together in a rushing chant that ran level with the heads of men and spread laterally beyond, rushing forward. The priest, speaking first then, rapidly intoning:

Hail Mary, full of grace,
Blessed art thou among women
Blessed is the fruit of thy . . .

Over this, over the word, then broke the cries of the people while the priest held the intoned word as a fundamental tone, their words falling swiftly spoken, his word delayed. While he boomed the great thundering word they continued, these words being the whole of their saying:

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us now and at the hour of our death . . .

But the priest had begun again, making again the swift words that opened the chant, and the people fell into a stillness that was like dust, a world destroyed. The people were nothing, they had fallen, their cries were lost and they had become the ashes of a burnt-out life, an extinct order. They fell away in a soft patter, not all in one falling, a few surviving one instant beyond the general death, but presently these were lost to the last soul, "hour of our death . . . our death . . ." the last dusty patter, the last expiring utterance. Over this destruction the priest had already begun the onward rush of a new creation.

Hail Mary, full of grace,
Blessed art thou among women
Blessed is the fruit of thy . . .

The great intoned word again, and the people are alive. A great rush of human living and all sprang into life instantly in one act of creation while the immense thundering word under them was a power to push them forward and on. Held again as the fundamental and richly intoned, it survived while they ran forward with their lifetime, their creation, their prayers and cries, their falling away at last into the words of departure.

> Holy Mary, Mother of God,
> Pray for us now and at the hour of our death . . .

Over and over this regeneration and death continued, running around the entire cycle of the Rosary, the Our Father of the large bead partaking of the same pattern, borrowing from the general chant. A mystery stood in a clear pattern, but was not entirely revealed to him, and Felix remembered Anne intently, seeing her from first to last in a sharp sense of her whole being which was made up of pictures and sounds and odors and remembered ways.

He fell into a half dream, his drooping eyes resting on his bent fingers as they lay on his lax thighs. It was a March day three years earlier. The wind was hurling laughter about among the trees and making laughter cry out of the creaking hinge of the barn gate. He walked out to the pasture to salt the young cattle, the yearlings that were feeding there, and as he walked he knew the odors of the salt that came up from the old basket in his hand. The herd came, eager to get what he had brought, and he walked among them, spreading the piles in three places so that all might have a share. The plump calves pushed one another away from the salt, and they bent their greedy muzzles to lick at the stones. While their smooth, sleek coats moved away in the sun and the wind he knew suddenly that there was a loveliness in girls and knew that he had only of late become aware of their prettiness, of their round soft flesh and the shy, veiled laughter that hid under their boldness, even under their profane words when they made as if they were angry, when they enacted distrust and put blame or blight on some matter. They carried a kindness within them that put away any anger that might leap out of their tongues. Walking back toward the house he met Anne in the path.

"What way did the turkey hen go?" she asked him.

He saw that she had grown into a prettiness, that she had put on all that he had been dreaming. A gentleness had come into her body. She had become precious to all men as she stood in the path. His voice was answering her, teasing, "The turkey hens are a woman's work."

"God's own sake, you are a mean boy, Felix Barbour. Won't tell whe'r you saw the old hen or not!"

He heard her calling the turkeys from the distant fence where the pasture gave way to the new field of wheat. Standing on the rail of the fence she was a child again, Annie, scarcely anything at all. She was a thin childish crying that called home the straying fowls.

The great wheel of the Rosary was running forward, rolling over men as they stood in the attitudes of prayer, the priest saying the swift chant:

> Hail Mary, full of grace,
> Blessed art thou among women
> Blessed is the fruit . . .

Summer and winter and Anne, they were running down the channel of the year. The year spread widely then, as if it flowed abroad to fill a wide field with corn. There was sweetness in the high blades of the corn and abundance in the full shucks as he tore each ear from the ripe stem.

"What price will it bring?" Anne was asking. She was standing beside the shock, her basket filled with corn for the turkeys. The half-green corn was hard to break from the ear, and her hands were burnt and sore from the tough husks. "What price will corn bring?" she was asking.

Felix named three other girls quickly, calling three names in his memory while Anne stood beside the shock to ask of the corn. There was a newer prettiness in her laugh and a fresh way of being a woman in her bent cheek when she smiled. He told the value of the corn and the measure of it in bushels to the acre. The four-ply measure of a woman's loveliness passed then down the rows of the cut field and went toward the pen where the turkeys were kept in autumn, and Felix smiled inwardly as he bent to tear apart the shock to get the inner ears. His thought floated on his floating breath where it

came and went in his chest, where it beat a rhythm of nothingness against his throat. The picture of the autumn corn faded and the dry odors of the blades of fodder gave way before the crying of frogs in the wet of grass, but these fell away with the pattering death cries of supplicating men and the greater voice boomed and droned the new creation:

> Hail Mary, full of grace,
> Blessed art thou among women . . .

The thunder broke on the word and the rattle of voices rushed from the sons of men who burst again into being. The first cries of the priest leaped over his thought of Anne and the three girls he had named. He saw Anne playing with the dog in the yard, saw her running after a chicken to drive it into a coop, saw her making herself a dress to wear to the convent school. She was talking to Dominic Brady beside the gate. She was gone from home, she was remembered clearly, remembered vaguely, forgotten, remembered, she was here, gone, everywhere present. She was saying that she would take the vows, standing beside the door to say this, making a departure to fit her words. A creation had been destroyed; it was falling away now into a clatter of weary death in the hurried leavings of old sayings that dropped from the mouths of weary men. But the priest had opened the earth anew and brought out a new dark vigor of life. There were remembered ways of girls in his leaping words of creation. They were soft to touch, they were given to laughter, easy to come to tears, easy with pity, easy with anger. They easily became women. His thought waked again from its repose on his folded hands. The chant of the Rosary was suddenly finished. The people seated themselves with a broken patter of infinite whispers made by shifting bodies and the ending postures of prayer.

The organ in the loft at the rear of the chapel began to play the Mendelssohn wedding march. It was played, not passionately, as in a human wedding, but softly, legato, as if it were played in a dream. Then Felix knew that the persons of the procession were coming, that they were walking into the chapel. Their coming was like the coming of the doves, was a

soft moving of wings. Looking backward quickly he saw that two nuns walked before carrying lighted tapers. The four postulants came then in the procession, walking two and two, and behind them came two novices carrying tapers. The lights from the candles fell on the faces of the women who carried them and lit up the inner surfaces of their white cowls and made more beautiful the life in their cheeks and their brows. The postulants were dressed as brides, each one wearing a white dress and a long white veil that was fastened with a wreath about the hair. They walked, two together, their hands folded as suppliants. A dark-haired girl and a full-breasted girl walked first. Then Anne and her companion, who was a tall slender girl, came. All stepped slowly, their little white shoes making no noise on the smooth boards of the aisle floor.

When their shadows passed him Felix glanced toward Lester, his brother, to see how this passing had touched him. The boy was sitting very still, his hands steady, his thought as if it slept on his folded hands. Their sister, Piety, was married. She had been married out of their home for a number of years and she seemed, therefore, as someone who was related to them, not as one of them. She seemed to be kinsfolk. Felix looked at her intently to see what surrounded her now in this strange moment while Anne mounted the aisle and went toward the altar steps. Three children drifted in the air about Piety, one of them dead now, all hers. She was watching Anne mount the steps in a happy rapture, looking out from behind the fog of the children.

Anne was very small as she stood beside the tall girl whose wreath fitted with a fine grace over her brown hair. The girls were kneeling in the altar now, bowing over their supplicating hands, and as they bowed the tall girl's rounded cheek showed beyond the line of her shoulder. The priest before the altar had a care never to turn his back upon the holies there, but if he had need to cross from one side to the other he turned about and faced whatever was there housed. While he talked of the solemnity of the hour and the sacredness of the rites enacted, his words flattened to a stillness and Felix watched Anne and the girl who wore the wreath with singular grace. She sat or knelt beside Anne, and the two together made a loveliness that surrounded their being and gave a softly shed

presence that reached his senses even when he looked away from them, which came home to him with a new pleasure and satisfaction when he returned his look to the place where they waited.

The choir above began to chant a thin hymn to God, a faint, high-pitched, unsonorous singing of nuns and girls, making beautiful Latin vows over the seated multitude. The hour delayed and fell drowsily apart. Felix knew, in the interval that grew into the severed hour, what manner of smile would come to the tall girl's face and how her thin lips would part to speak and how her head would bow over prayers or work. He knew how her eyes would follow printed words over a page or how she would walk out into the sunlight and what her tall lithe flesh would be as it passed over a farm, as it went within doors. He wondered what name he should call her by in his mind and a vapor of fine names poured over his thought. He loved his sister Anne entirely then and was pleased that she knelt near the tall lovely girl whom he named now with these remote pleasures. These two, dressed as brides, in their white lace and thin veils, knelt together a little apart from the other two brides who knelt at the right of the altar, and in his thought he once slipped quietly between the two, Anne and the named one whom he could not name, and took each by the arm to cherish both forever, but this vague wish died slowly in the mind as if some inner hand forbade it, but his eyes clung then to the bent head of the tall girl and saw again the pink of her cheek and the line of her shoulder.

The priest was giving the brides then the garments they were to wear, piece by piece. The tunic was laid first on their outstretched hands. It was folded neatly together and was made of some soft white wool cloth, and the priest called it by its symbolic name, naming it with a speech. When he had given the tunic he turned to the table at his left where other garments were folded. The tall girl took her garments onto her extended hands with an exquisite care. Felix dwelt rather with her bowed head, her faintly tinted cheek, with the fall of her veil and the droop of her wreath, with the line of her throat beneath her veil and the round curve of her shoulder. The priest gave them the girdle or cincture, placing each coiled in a ring upon the folds of the tunic as each girl held it on her flattened hands, and he named its significance

with solemn words. The pile of things on the table beside the altar was diminishing and the ceremony rolled along, the hour severed now and lost out of its nearness, touching Felix as a ceremony that went from him remotely as did recurring prayers, while he longed to know the girl's exact name and to be able to say it in his mind, to name his sense of her loveliness with a word.

The priest was giving the scapular, the most essential part of the habit, he said, the gift of the Virgin. All the last burdens were laid now, one by one, upon the outstretched palms of the girls, for he had given the veil, symbol he said of modesty.

"It will cover you," he said.

It would be the symbol of their poverty, chastity, and obedience. The wedding march was played again and the girls came from the altar, led by the two novices with the lighted tapers. Each girl carried her precious burdens on her outstretched palms, as she had taken them, and each looked forward, seeing neither the right nor the left, as she passed. Their small steps were set down softly on the bars of the faintly played march and they went out of the chapel into some hidden part of the convent.

The choir chanted again, another high thin hymn, the singing of girls, and Felix heard girls laughing through the thin outcry of the chant, heard remembered laughter blowing in a wind through the settled bars of the incantation. He heard Anne running down the yard at their farm to drive a hen away from the little turkeys while they had their food under the lilac bush, and he heard her shout in the wind and heard her laugh when the old hen flew wildly over a fence to escape her clamor. Again he wanted the name of the tall fair girl and he felt the touch of soft light hands at his brow and at his throat, the hands of the tall girl fluttering over his face and touching his shoulder, and he felt himself open as if to give out some fine inner essence of himself. He lived upon the laughter that flowed under the hymn and lived swiftly as haunted by an unrealized disaster that threatened to arise from some hidden part and bring the whole earth to a swift consummation. Opened to give all that he had in the brief moments left to life, he thought more minutely of the fair girl's graceful splendors of being and he knew entirely what

her laughter would be, longing then for her name, for some word that would signify herself and name his own delight in her.

The steps came back to the tread of the hymn which the voices in the loft had rounded to an amen. The girls wore now the long white robes of young nuns and on their heads were the stiff veils of the women of the holy order. As they passed, Felix looked up into their faces and saw them, recognizing each one with a pleasure in the recognition. The tall girl wore her linen veil as he knew she would and carried her scapular with her own grace, as if she loaned her grace temporarily to it. The priest met them in the sanctuary and again they were kneeling. The priest was giving them their last gifts. He was giving them their rosaries, the long pattern by which, as nuns, they would pray. Then he was giving them their names.

Felix felt a leaping within his heart to know that he would now hear the name of the lovely girl called and would know it thereafter. The priest was speaking, the large girl at the right of the altar knelt before him:

"You were known in the world as Annette Stevenson."

There was a pause, and Felix flung far across the country to a house on Severn Creek, the home of the Stevensons. His mind was leaping swiftly with recognition and expectations. But the priest was speaking again, taking back all that he had given:

"Your name henceforth will be Sister Mary Agnes."

He had turned from the large girl now to her companion and what passed there went over in a dull dream, a name given and taken away. The priest now turned his back to the congregation and passed the holies, going toward the left of the altar, toward the two small figures that knelt there. A pleasure leaped up within Felix to know that he would now know the name of the lovely girl and he leaped forward in mind to take the name, his thought already caressing it.

The voice leaned above the slender figure that knelt next and said:

"In the world you were known as Aurelia Bannon . . ."

Aurelia, then. He had it. A dim sense of consummation and satisfaction played over him. He stirred in his place and

shifted his hands, gratified. Aurelia was the name. He might have known, he reflected, that this lovely creature would carry such a name. It filled his entire mind and flowed over into his sense of all that he had seen of her. But the priest was speaking, continuing, making solemn words over the leaning girl, and Felix caught again at what he had said and held it to try to stay what would follow, but this was useless. The voice moved forward, having spoken the first pronouncement:

"You were known in the world as Aurelia Bannon . . .

"Henceforth your name will be Sister Mary Dolores."

The world broke and disaster followed. The ashes of a burnt-out creation rattled and pattered down endless cliffs of shales and Felix was aware of the rasping breath in his throat, was aware of Anne, of the last of the kneeling postulants, the smallest figure. She knelt bowed, as if to take the pronouncement on her bent shoulders. The priest had soon finished. He moved slightly and settled over the small kneeler, saying softly, as if he were already done:

"In the world you were known as Anne Barbour . . .

"Henceforth your name will be Sister Magdalen."

CORONER'S INQUEST

BY MARC CONNELLY

FROM *Collier's*

MARC CONNELLY

won the Pulitzer Prize of 1930 for his play "The Green Pastures." He is a dynamic figure in the theater. Among his successes is the unforgettable "Dulcy," written with George Kaufmann.

"WHAT is your name?"

"Frank Wineguard."

"Where do you live?"

"A hundred and eighty-five West Fifty-fifth Street."

"What is your business?"

"I'm stage manage for *Hello, America.*"

"You were the employer of James Dawle?"

"In a way. We both worked for Mr. Bender, the producer, but I have charge backstage."

"Did you know Theodore Robel?"

"Yes, sir."

"Was he in your company, too?"

"No, sir. I met him when we started rehearsals. That was about three months ago, in June. We sent out a call for midgets and he and Jimmy showed up together, with a lot of others. Robel was too big for us. I didn't see him again until we broke into their room Tuesday."

"You discovered their bodies?"

"Yes, sir. Mrs. Pike, there, was with me."

"You found them both dead?"

"Yes, sir."

"How did you happen to be over in Jersey City?"

"Well, I'd called up his house at curtain time Monday night when I found Jimmy hadn't shown up for the performance. Mrs. Pike told me they were both out, and I asked her to have either Jimmy or Robel call me when they came in. Then Mrs. Pike called me Tuesday morning and said she tried to get into the room but she'd found the door was bolted. She said all her other roomers were out and she was alone and scared.

"I'd kind of suspected something might be wrong. So I said to wait and I'd come over. Then I took the tube over and got there about noon. Then we went up and I broke down the door."

"Did you see this knife there?"

"Yes, sir. It was on the floor, about a foot from Jimmy."

"You say you suspected something was wrong. What do you mean by that?"

"I mean I felt something might have happened to Jimmy. Nothing like this, of course. But I knew he'd been feeling very depressed lately, and I knew Robel wasn't helping to cheer him up any."

"You mean that they had had quarrels?"

"No, sir. They just both had the blues. Robel had had them for a long time. Robel was Jimmy's brother-in-law. He'd married Jimmy's sister—she was a midget, too—about five years ago, but she died a year or so later. Jimmy had been living with them and after the sister died he and Robel took a room in Mrs. Pike's house together."

"How did you learn this?"

"Jimmy and I were pretty friendly at the theater. He was a nice little fellow and seemed grateful that I'd given him his job. We'd only needed one midget for an Oriental scene in the second act and the agencies had sent about fifteen. Mr. Gehring, the director, told me to pick one of them as he was busy and I picked Jimmy because he was the littlest.

"After I got to know him he told me how glad he was I'd given him the job. He hadn't worked for nearly a year. He wasn't little enough to be a featured midget with circuses or in museums so he had to take whatever came along. Anyway, we got to be friendly and he used to tell me about his brother-in-law and all."

"He never suggested that there might be ill-feeling between him and his brother-in-law?"

"No, sir. I don't imagine he'd ever had any words at all with Robel. As a matter of fact from what I could gather I guess Jimmy had quite a lot of affection for him and he certainly did everything he could to help him. Robel was a lot worse off than Jimmy. Robel hadn't worked for a couple of years and Jimmy practically supported him. He used to tell me how Robel had been sunk ever since he got his late growth."

"His what?"

"His late growth. I heard it happens among midgets often, but Jimmy told me about it first. Usually a midget will stay as long as he lives at whatever height he reaches when he's fourteen or fifteen, but every now and then one of them starts

growing again just before he's thirty, and he can grow a foot or even more in a couple of years. Then he stops growing for good. But of course he don't look so much like a midget any more.

"That's what had happened to Robel about three years ago. Of course he had trouble getting jobs and it hit him pretty hard.

"From what Jimmy told me and from what Mrs. Pike says, I guess he used to talk about it all the time. Robel used to come over and see his agent in New York twice a week, but there was never anything for him. Then he'd go back to Jersey City. Most of the week he lived alone because after the show started Jimmy often stayed in New York with a cousin or somebody that lived uptown.

"Lately Robel hadn't been coming over to New York at all. But every Saturday night Jimmy would go over to Jersey City and stay till Monday with him, trying to cheer him up. Every Sunday they'd take a walk and go to a movie. I guess as they walked along the street Robel realized most the difference in their heights. And I guess that's really why they're both dead now."

"How do you mean?"

"Well, as I told you, Jimmy would try to sympathize with Robel and cheer him up. He and Robel both realized that Jimmy was working and supporting them and that Jimmy would probably keep right on working, according to the ordinary breaks of the game, while Robel would always be too big. It simply preyed on Robel's mind.

"And then three weeks ago Monday Jimmy thought he saw the ax fall.

"I was standing outside the stage door—it was about seven-thirty—and Jimmy came down the alley. He looked down in the mouth, which I thought was strange seeing that he usually used to come in swinging his little cane and looking pretty cheerful. I said, 'How are you feeling, Jimmy?' and he said, 'I don't feel so good, Mr. Wineguard.' So I said, 'Why, what's the matter, Jimmy?' I could see there really was something the matter with him by this time.

"'I'm getting scared,' he said, and I says, 'Why?'

"'I'm starting to grow again,' he says. He said it the way you'd say you just found out you had some disease that was

going to kill you in a week. He looked like he was shivering.

"'Why, you're crazy, Jimmy,' I says. 'You ain't growing.'

"'Yes, I am,' he says. 'I'm thirty-one and it's that late growth like my brother-in-law has. My father had it, but his people had money, so it didn't make much difference to him. It's different with me. I've got to keep working.'

"He went on like that for a while and then I tried to kid him out of it.

"'You look all right to me,' I said. 'How tall have you been all along?'

"'Thirty-seven inches,' he says. So I says, 'Come on into the prop-room and I'll measure you.'

"He backed away from me. 'No,' he says, 'I don't want to know how much it is.' Then he went up to the dressing-room before I could argue with him.

"All week he looked awful sunk. When he showed up the next Monday evening he looked almost white.

"I grabbed him as he was starting upstairs to make up.

"'Come on out of it,' I says. I thought he'd make a break and try to get away from me, but he didn't. He just sort of smiled as if I didn't understand. Finally he says, 'It ain't any use, Mr. Wineguard.'

"'Listen,' I says, 'you've been over with that brother-in-law of yours, haven't you?' He said yes, he had. 'Well,' I says, 'that's what's bothering you. From what you tell me about him he's talked about his own tough luck so much that he's given you the willies, too. Stay away from him the end of this week.'

"He stood there for a second without saying anything. Then he says, 'That wouldn't do any good. He's all alone over there and he needs company. Anyway, it's all up with me, I guess. I've grown nearly two inches already.'

"I looked at him. He was pretty pathetic, but outside of that there wasn't any change in him as far as I could see.

"I says, 'Have you been measured?' He said he hadn't. Then I said, 'Then how do you know? Your clothes fit you all right, except your pants, and as a matter of fact they seem a little longer.'

"'I fixed my suspenders and let them down a lot farther,' he says. 'Besides they were always a little big for me.'

"'Let's make sure,' I says. 'I'll get a yard-stick and we'll make absolutely sure.'

"But I guess he was too scared to face things. He wouldn't do it.

"He managed to dodge me all week. Then, last Saturday night, I ran into him as I was leaving the theater. I asked him if he felt any better.

"'I feel all right,' he says. He really looked scared to death.

"That's the last time I saw him before I went over to Jersey City after Mrs. Pike phoned me Tuesday morning."

"Patrolman Gorlitz has testified that the bodies were in opposite ends of the room when he arrived. They were in that position when you forced open the door?"

"Yes, sir."

"The medical examiner has testified that they were both dead of knife wounds, apparently from the same knife. Would you assume the knife had fallen from Dawle's hand as he fell?"

"Yes, sir."

"Has it been your purpose to suggest that both men were driven to despondency by a fear of lack of employment for Dawle, and that they might have committed suicide?"

"No, sir. I don't think anything of the kind."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, when Mrs. Pike and I went in the room and I got a look at the knife, I said to Mrs. Pike that that was a funny kind of a knife for them to have in the room. You can see it's a kind of a butcher knife. Then Mrs. Pike told me it was one that she'd missed from her kitchen a few weeks before. She'd never thought either Robel or Jimmy had taken it. It struck me as funny Robel or Jimmy had stolen it, too. Then I put two and two together and found out what really happened. Have you got the little broken cane that was lying on the bed?"

"Is this it?"

"Yes, sir. Well, I'd never been convinced by Jimmy that he was really growing. So when Mrs. Pike told me about the knife I started figuring. I figured that about five minutes before that knife came into play Jimmy must have found it, probably by accident."

"Why by accident?"

"Because Robel had gone a little crazy, I guess. He'd stolen it and kept it hidden from Jimmy. And when Jimmy found it he wondered what Robel had been doing with it. Then Robel wouldn't tell him and Jimmy found out for himself. Or maybe Robel did tell him. Anyway, Jimmy looked at the cane. It was the one he always carried. He saw where, when Jimmy wasn't looking, Robel had been cutting little pieces off the end of it."

CARELESS LOVE

BY ROARK BRADFORD

FROM *Collier's*

ROARK BRADFORD

writes of the cotton plantation darkeys with the gay insouciance which aptly interprets their spirit. His "Ol' Man Adam an' His Chillun" furnished the theme of the Pulitzer Prize Play, "The Green Pastures."

LUTHER blamed no one but himself for marrying Christeen. As much as he hated her, he admitted that she was against the marriage and that he, himself, had contrived to catch her fancy.

And being married to a woman—married with a courthouse license—is no trivial matter among the plantation Negroes along Black River in northern Louisiana. When you marry a woman with a pair of courthouse licenses you get the Law mixed into your affairs, whereas if you merely marry with a pair of commissary licenses, the Law has nothing to do with it.

"I don't mean jest to marry you, gal," Luther told Christeen. "I mean I'm goin' to Columbia and buy me a pair er cou'thouse licenses and marry you good. Den us gonter take and hang dem licenses right over de mantelpiece whar all kin see. And den I reckon won't nobody try to shame you."

Christeen capitulated. The women had been wagging their tongues about her and Bulger Doakes. Of course they didn't know anything bad, because there was nothing bad to know. But Christeen knew that if big old Bulger kept up his sweet talk—well, a poor girl can resist only so much. And Bulger was married up with a woman named Della, which made it all the more scandalous. He had promised to take Della to the commissary and divorce her for Christeen. But, still, the women would talk, even if he did. Christeen in her mind could hear the pious sisters sing:

> "So I read on down to-a Number Ten:
> Steal another woman's man, you's a-doin' a sin!"

And a commissary husband, where the couple goes to the commissary and registers as man and wife for the purpose of obtaining supplies on credit, is valid for social purposes in the Black River country. And more convenient than the more elaborate legal process of buying a license, too.

If Luther had married Christeen with a commissary license, all they would have had to do to end the marriage would be to notify the man at the store that they no longer were man and

wife, and that each, thereafter, would be responsible for his or her supplies account. Whereas, getting the Law mixed into their domestic affairs, one or the other of the wedded pair would have to go to Arkansas to break the spell.

Only the more prosperous indulged in the courthouse license weddings. They were expensive. First you had to give a doctor five dollars for a piece of paper that said you could buy the license. Then you gave the man at the courthouse three dollars and a half for the big, fancy license that entitled you to get married. And of course a man had to buy his bride-to-be a present—usually a fancy dress. Luther paid four dollars and a dime for Christeen's.

"Twelve dollars and sixty cents I paid jest to marry you, gal," he grumbled. "And dat's twenty dollars mo'n you's worth. I c'd a tuck dem twelve dollars and sixty cents and rid de 'scursion train into N'Awlins and back."

"I wisht you had a rid somethin' somewhar," Christeen retorted. "Den I wouldn't a been married up to a squinchy little ole runt like you. You might be de best cotton raiser on de place. And maybe you got more credik at de store dan anybody. And might you kin chew more chewin' tobacco dan de yuther mens, but you sho' is a rotten husband."

They lived in a small cabin a mile or more from the main settlement, on the very bank of the river. The boss-man had a big field of newly cleared land that he wanted worked, and Luther, being steady and industrious and a good hand with the mules, was trusted to work the isolated new ground with practically no supervision.

For Luther it was about the same as living right in the settlement. He worked all day and slept all night. But for Christeen it was difficult. She missed seeing the neighbors all the time. She dreaded the long walks through the fields to the store for supplies. She tried diligently to make the little cabin attractive by festooning colored paper from barrel hoops on the ceiling and putting brown pictures from the catalogue on the walls. But she couldn't get interested. She worked doggedly in the fields, hoeing, and she was among the best hoe-hands on the place. But hoeing with a group of women was one thing, and hoeing alone was something else. She grumbled to Luther, but she got no sympathy.

"I done married you, gal," he said. "Now you come devilin'

me. Did you brought me back some chewin' tobacco f'm de store?"

Christeen admitted that she hadn't been to the store that day.

"Sho' you ain't," Luther said. "'Cause you ain't got no sense in yo' haid. But me? I been plowin' out yonder, all day long, and I ax you to git me a plug er chewin'. But naw! You got to grumble 'bout how lonesome you is, and I got to wawk plum to de store, and me tired as a dog, jest so I kin git me a chew."

The crop progressed. Luther rose earlier in the mornings and worked later in the evenings. Christeen never forgot his chewing tobacco again. But her visits to the store became more protracted as the days dragged by. And one day she contrived to return through the field in which old Bulger was plowing—just to pass the time of day with him, she told herself.

"I gits so tired er lookin' at dat little ole runt," she told Bulger, "dat my eyes is pyore hurtin' for a sight at you."

"Yeah?" Bulger stopped his mule and rested between the plow handles. "Well, baby, I might c'd bust up marryin' wid Della and marry wid you, did you tawk sorter sweet at me."

"Nawp," Christeen stated positively. "I and Luther is cou'thoused."

"Dat's what I had in mind," Bulger told her. "You git him to go up in Arkansas, quick as he gits done layin' by his cotton, and den I'll move in wid you. Den I and you kin pick dat goodlookin' crop he's raisin', and Della, she kin pick mine—"

"You don't know Luther," objected Christeen. "Dat squinch owl ain't gonter go off and leave dat cotton patch. Hit make a bale to de acre, and he love hit more gooder dan he love hisse'f, mighty nigh."

"But you tawk him off," urged Bulger. "You got a easy word and a sweet tongue. Ef'n he's a man, well, you kin tawk him plum to Guinea. You sweet-tawk him to Arkansas, you hyar?"

That night Christeen did her best. Luther's supper was just as he liked it, and her talk-talk was honey and sugar. She broached the subject tactfully. "I hyared," she suggested, "dat hit's a heap er jobs workin' for wages up in Arkansas, right after de crops is laid by."

"Yeah?" Luther bit off his after-dinner chew of tobacco and began upon it with relish.

"And f'm de tawk I hyars," continued Christeen, "you ain't hardly gonter be able to give yo' cotton away dis fall. Let alone sell hit."

Luther chewed and reflected. "Who tole you dat tawk?" he asked.

Christeen fidgeted. "Hit's de tawk at de store," she lied.

"Bulger gonter git him a job workin' for wages?" Luther demanded suddenly.

Christeen fumbled her hands nervously. "How do I know what Bulger gonter git him a job doin'?" she countered. "I ain't mindin' Bulger's business. Dat big rascal big enough to mind his own!" The last assertion, she decided immediately, shouldn't have been made. But she knew in her heart it was the natural truth!

Luther ejected his tobacco cud, stood up and faced Christeen. "Woman," he said, "I got some sense in my haid. Don't you go snake-in-de-grassin' on me. Do you like Bulger, well, go on and marry wid him 'cause I don't like you. But as long as you's bein' married wid me, I ain't gonter have no yuther man on yo' mind. I married jest 'cause de boss-man say I ought to git married when I moved down hyar. And I got crazy in my haid and married you 'cause you was de biggest fool on de place and I was crazy. But do I ketch you snake-in-de-grassin' on me, I ain't gonter whup you. Not me. I'm gonter whup you and Bulger, too!" And he walked abruptly into the house and went to bed.

Christeen sat through his talk quietly, meekly. But when he came to the part where he said he was going to whip Bulger, it was too much. She broke into a hearty laugh. "You?" she demanded. "You and who else?"

That was Tuesday night. On Wednesday it rained and Luther couldn't work in the fields, so he spent the day hauling out steamboat wood that he had cut at odd times. The steamboat captain paid three dollars a cord for wood stacked on the bank.

Christeen continued her daily jaunts to the store, but she avoided meeting Bulger. After all, Luther was right. They were married. He had spent his good money—twelve dollars

and sixty cents—and she knew in her heart she wasn't worth that much to him as a wife.

Then, too, people liked to gossip. The women just lived from one scandal to another. And if she had an affair with Bulger—and both of them married—the other women would shame her out of the settlement. A married woman had to mind her step. They wouldn't shame Bulger; they would laugh at him, and say: "Dat big scound'el is a sight! He jest gits after *all* de women! Dat Bulger, he's one more!" But they wouldn't laugh at her. They would gather up their children when they saw her, and suck their teeth. "Yonder goes dat bad Christeen," they would say. "Ain't got a lick er shame in dis worrul'! Got a good husband, but got to snake-in-de-grass wid some yuther man! Never was no good, nohow, and gittin' worser."

At prayer meeting, Sunday night, an open break came. Bulger sang bass in the choir, and Christeen sang "woman's lead." Luther, who did not sing, sat in the back of the church and watched suspiciously.

When Christeen took a high note, she looked at Bulger and made the note tremble in her mouth. Whereupon Bulger bellowed out a low, croaking sound and "wropped up" Christeen's voice. Then they exchanged knowing glances.

Luther fumed throughout the services. When meeting broke up, he went straight to Bulger. "You ape!" he said, "you was sing-singin' at my wife!"

"Go on, now, Luther," protested Bulger. "I ain't huntin' for no trouble."

"Yo' don't got to hunt," Luther stated. "You done found hit." And he made a motion toward his hip pocket. He said afterwards that he merely was reaching for his chewing tobacco, but Bulger said he thought Luther was reaching for a razor. Anyway, when he moved his hand, Bulger hit him on the jaw with his fist.

The next day Luther worked in his cotton, "laying it by." His jaw ached. He couldn't eat. He couldn't even chew tobacco with comfort. "Jest got to put hit in my mouf," he grumbled, "and soak de subster out'n hit like a baby suckin' on a middlin' skin."

By the middle of the week, he finished plowing his crop, and began hauling out more steamboat wood. He and Chris-

teen kept on the coolest of terms. She had his meals ready on time, so there would be no cause for argument, and Luther ate the meals in silence so he would not provoke one. By Saturday noon there were six cords of steamboat wood stacked neatly upon the river bank.

"Well," Luther said casually, "hit bein' Sadday, I reckon us might go over to de store."

They put on their best clothes and walked the mile in silence, each anticipating a dull time and hoping for a gay one.

At the store the other workers and their families gathered, exchanging small talk and chattering foolishly among themselves, all enjoying the weekly half-holiday with good-natured mildness. Luther and Christeen walked in. Luther went to the counter and called for a "plug er Star and two boxes er sardine fishes wid crackers, and de cans opened up." Christeen edged into a group of women who gathered around the easy-talking Bulger.

Bulger was eating cheese and crackers and keeping the women in an uproar with his talk. "Yeah," he said, "I and Della done quit marryin'. She too good for me. I gived her my crop, 'scusin' what I owes hyar at de store. And me? I'm woman-hunting. All er y'all ladies better mind out!"

"Ain't you a sight!" exclaimed one of the women. "I swear! A lady jest ain't safe wid you rampin' around! Ole Bulger is a *casel*" And the giggling was general.

"Bulger is jest one more!" piped in Christeen. "He jest do womens like dat! You jest can't trust dat man for no husband, a-tall!"

"Aw, I'm a good husband," Bulger protested. "De only thing, I got to git me a wife like I likes. I got my eye on one, now. And jest quick as I kin divoce her away f'm her husband, I'm gonter marry her so hard she won't know what hit her!"

"Humph!" grunted Christeen. But her blood tingled to the tips of her ears. "Dat's what you tole Della, too, I bet."

"Baby," said Bulger, dropping his voice to a soft buzzing whisper, "ef'n I'd a sawn you before I got married up wid Della, well, me and you—"

"You, Bulger!" Luther had just received his purchases and come up to the group. "You's sweet-tawkin' my wife!"

Bulger started to tell Luther it was friendly talk, but just

as he opened his mouth to say it Luther hurled an opened tin of sardines squarely into his face.

The fight was brief. Bulger sputtered in surprise a time or two, and then swung his big fist to Luther's jaw.

Luther got up and sidled off. He was mad; he felt abused. And the worst part of it was, he was right and Bulger was wrong, and still he couldn't do a thing about it.

Before long, he ambled back home, leaving Christeen at the store to continue her jow-jowing with Bulger. As he passed through his own cotton field he felt a thrill of pride in the fact that his was the best crop on the plantation. It was waist-high, and already the purple blooms were appearing under the big, greenish-blue leaves.

"Some cotton," he told himself. But even in talking to himself his jaw ached. "I bet Bulger is jest 'busin' me like he do so he kin run me off and git my cotton. He don't want my woman. He want my cotton."

He went on home and sat upon the porch, where the breeze from the river cooled him. He reviewed the situation. Christeen had tried to lie him off to Arkansas. And when she failed, Bulger had set about to abuse him off. They wanted him in Arkansas, which, of course, would not only leave his cotton field open to Bulger's possession, but it would divorce him from Christeen so she and Bulger could get married.

"Ef'n hit was jest gittin' shut er dat Christeen," he grumbled, "hit'd be worth goin' to Arkansas fawty times. But I ain't gonter give nobody de best cotton crop on de place." He drew his plug of tobacco from his pocket and started to bite off a chew. But an ache in his jaw stopped him.

The cotton wouldn't be ready for picking and sale for more than a month yet, and his jaw was aching in the immediate present. The thought came to him, instinctively, that Arkansas might be a relief both from Bulger and Christeen. "But dat's a powerful good crop er cotton," he added.

Further worry was halted by the arrival of the steamboat. It came around the bend suddenly and pulled in at the woodpile. The mud clerk scaled the wood, and without preliminaries the roustabouts began toting it on board. Luther ambled down and the chief clerk called him into the office.

"We scaled about six cords," he said. "Eighteen dollars." He handed Luther the money in bills.

"Y'all ain't goin' up in Arkansas, is you?" he asked.

"Just been," the clerk said. "Going to New Orleans, now. Better ride down. The mate is short a couple of rousters and he'll haul you for nothing. And you can have an awful lot of fun down there with that eighteen dollars."

Luther grinned. "Naw, suh," he said. "I sort er counted on goin' to Arkansas, maybe."

"We'll be back a week from Tuesday," the clerk said. "The captain is taking only part of your wood this trip, and I guess we'll pick up the rest on the up-trip. You can catch us then."

Luther wandered ashore and back to his cabin. The rousters loaded part of the wood, and the boat pulled out.

"Maybe I *could* have a heap er fun in N' Awlins wid dis eighteen dollars," Luther suddenly decided. "But," he added, "de boat is long gone."

Dark hurriedly followed sunset and Christeen had not come home. "Maybe, now, a man might git some fun in N' Awlins," Luther repeated. "Maybe de 'scursion train gonter run, too. I been layin' off to make dat 'scursion trip—"

He got up, suddenly, and started walking. He walked the nine miles to Columbia that night, and had several hours in which to sleep in the depot before the early morning train, with special rates for Sunday and special cars for Negroes, came in.

"Round trip," the agent told him, "and you can't spend your ticket back home. Now hang on to it when the conductor gives it back to you."

Luther enjoyed every mile of the ride to New Orleans. And New Orleans he found even grander than the train. Luther gorged his joy-hungry soul all the way from Rampart Street to Claiborne Avenue, and back again.

And there was something stronger than lemonade with sugar in it to drink, too, a very friendly, well-dressed man who liked Luther immensely, showed him. They went into a place where there were tables, and men and women drinking and talking and carrying on, and they had a drink. The first swallow felt like Bulger's fist, but after Luther got it down it was fine. A few more drinks, and he got very comfortable. Then he got sleepy.

It was morning when he woke up. He was crouched down

behind a barrel in a very dirty alley. His head ached and his tongue was thick.

"Da-a-ag!" he groaned. "Vg-g-gh!"

He stood up and tried to orient himself. "Somethin' must er happened which I don't remember about," he decided.

He felt through his pockets. They were empty, save for his return ticket. "Maybe dis'll git me back home," he decided, and he wandered about, asking questions, until he finally came to the depot. But a red-capped man only laughed at him. "Yo' train left at midnight," he said. "You might as well th'ow dat 'scursion ticket away, 'cause de 'scursion is long gone. And wawkin' is bad."

He wandered back up Rampart Street. Suddenly, he remembered that he hadn't eaten anything since the afternoon before, and with that consciousness came the strong smell of coffee. Immediately the whole world seemed to be filled with coffee stalls.

He tried for a long time to figure how a man without any money and among strangers could get a cup of coffee. Finally, desperate, he went into one of the numerous small lunch stands which was presided over by a motherly looking old woman.

"Lady," he began, meekly, "will you please—?"

The woman looked at him suspiciously. "Lemme see de inside er yo' hands," she said, roughly.

Luther displayed his work-gnarled palms.

"Country nigger, hunh?" the woman hazarded. "Comed down on de 'scursion and got drunked, I bet. On Saratoga Street. Well, I ain't gonter see no fool starve for no nickel's worth er coffee and sinkers."

While Luther gulped the strong, hot coffee, and munched lightly at the soggy roll, the old woman drew out his story.

"Don't take and let dat no-good git yo' woman and yo' cotton, too," she decided. "Let him git de woman, 'cause Gawd ain't gonter bless a woman which'll two-time on her husband. But don't let him git dat cotton. What you got to do is, you got to git home before he gits dat cotton."

"Hit's a fur piece to wawk," Luther suggested.

"Git you a job workin'," the woman told him. "Save yo' wages, and ride back like you rid away. Hit's a heap er work goin' on, down at de river, I hyars. Dey's payin' fawty cents a hour for totin' rice, down at Bienville Street."

Following her detailed directions, Luther found his way to the Bienville Street wharf. There was lots of work being done, too. Long streams of Negroes, each carrying a sack of rice, marched on and off the steamboats and barges that were tied up. He watched them for a few minutes, trying to decide which line he should join, and as he watched he unconsciously reached to his hip pocket for his chewing tobacco. The tobacco was gone, too!

Immediately, he recalled that he hadn't had a chew of tobacco since the afternoon before, and that that was an awful long time for a man to be without a chew.

"Well, don't dat beat de jukes!" he exclaimed. "Hyar I was about to git a job workin', and how a man gonter work when he ain't got nothin' to chew on?"

He looked about. Under the shed was a lunch stand where sandwiches and soda pop were being sold. And chewing tobacco! Luther saw the square, flat box, tilted at one end of the counter. He hurried over.

"I want some er dat Star, Cap'm," Luther said, meekly, "but I ain't got no money—"

The man looked at Luther. "You workin'?" he demanded.

"Not yit," Luther admitted.

"Well, take a walk," the man said. "It takes money to buy stuff here."

Luther returned to the wharf, and sat down upon a barrel. Never in his life had he wanted a chew of tobacco so badly! He looked at the long lines of workmen earning forty cents an hour—money that he needed to get back home on—but his tongue searched the tobaccoless caverns of his mouth.

Presently a gruff-looking white man came up. "Want to work, boy?" he asked. "Paying forty cents for toting rice."

"Yassuh," Luther said. "I wants to work, powerful bad. But—"

"But what?" demanded the man. "Too lazy, hunh?"

"Now, suh, Cap'm," protested Luther. "I'm in a swivit. I ain't got no chewin' tobacco, and de man over yonder won't sell me none onless I pays money for hit. And I ain't got no money and can't git none to I goes to work. And I jest got my mind so sot on chewin' tobacco dat I can't git hit sot on goin' to work."

The man laughed. "Let me see your hands," he said, and Luther displayed again his work-marked palms.

"Take this dime," the white man said, "and get you a chew. Then come back and give me your name."

For five days Luther worked constantly. Payday was Saturday noon, but with a steady job the woman who had given him coffee extended credit to the extent of food and lodging and a dime a day for a small piece of tobacco. When payday came, he had money enough to ride the steamboat home.

He hadn't done a great deal of thinking during the time. He was too busy toting rice during the day, and sleeping at nights, to worry about what he would do with Christeen and Bulger and his cotton crop. But occasionally, just before he dropped off to sleep, the old woman's welcome advice to "git back and don't let him git yo' cotton" rang in his ears.

The first day and night on the steamboat were uneventful. But soon after they passed Baton Rouge, Luther suddenly discovered that his plug of tobacco was almost gone. He hoarded the last chew the second day, and as late into the night as he could stand it. The next day he tried "borrowing" a chew from some of the rousters, but none of them, it seemed, chewed. They would give him a smoke. But Luther wanted a chew. They suggested that he try to buy some chewing at the bar, on the boiler deck.

"We quit carrying chewing," the barkeeper said. "Nobody buys it any more. How about a smoke?"

Luther told him he didn't smoke.

"Try one of these cigars," the bartender suggested. "They ought to be fair chewing; they're no good as a smoke."

Luther purchased a cigar for five cents, and proceeded to chew it. It wasn't so very good, at first, and it rapidly got worse and worse. For a quarter of an hour he worked on it, and finally gave up.

"I'm de biggest fool I ever seed," Luther admitted to himself. "I c'd a buyed me a whole plug wid my money before I left N' Awlins. Or, ef'n I had jest stayed at home, I c'd a been chawin' on dat plug on my mantelpiece, right now. But now, I got to go to N' Awlins to git some fun. I got to git sick, I got to git hongry, I got to work totin' rice like a mule, I got

to lose my eighteen dollars I made cuttin' wood, I got to maybe lose my cotton crop, and maybe not git shut er Christeen. All 'cause I ain't got no brains in my haid."

Shortly after he got rid of his cigar, he began feeling dizzy. He sat down on deck. Then he lay down. There was an unsteadiness of the boat that worried him. And presently he became nauseated.

The boat left the Mississippi River for Old, and Luther thought he would die. Through the brief run from Old River through Red he did not care much whether he died or not. But when the boat stuck its nose into Black River he began feeling better. He knew Black River, and it wouldn't be long, now, before he was home.

"I got mighty nigh a whole plug er chewin' settin' right back on my mantelpiece," he told everyone who would listen. "Mighty nigh a whole plug. I bought hit at de store, a week ago Sadday, and jest cut off a little piece to tote in my pocket."

When the boat rounded into the landing at Luther's woodpile, Luther did not wait for the stage to be lowered. As soon as it came within jumping distance of the bank, Luther jumped. He ran up the bank, and toward his house. But he stopped before he got there. For on the porch, as domestic as could be, sat Christeen and Bulger!

"Dat nigger done moved in on me," he exclaimed.

But that worried him only for an instant. In his mind, registering much more forcibly than the sight of Christeen and Bulger, was a long, thick, black plug of chewing tobacco that rested inside the house where he had left it. He hurried on.

He saw Christeen say something to Bulger, and then both of them got up and went inside, shutting the door behind them. Luther went to the door and tried it. Christeen had latched it from the inside.

"Open dat door, fool!" he yelled. "Open dat door and—"

"Go on away f'm hyar," Bulger's voice warned. "We done divo'ced you, son. You don't live hyar no more."

"Open dat door," repeated Luther.

"We ain't huntin' no trouble, Luther," Bulger began again. But Luther didn't hear. He stepped off the porch to the little woodpile and got the ax. A few vigorous blows battered

the door down, and he rushed inside with the ax in his hand and a wild look in his eye.

He ran to the mantelpiece, grabbed his precious plug of tobacco, and took a generous chew.

The rush of flavor through his mouth and around his tongue soothed him mightily, and he looked about the room.

Christeen was in a corner, whimpering like a scared child, and Bulger was on his knees in the middle of the floor.

"Don't hit me wid dat ax, son," he begged. "*Mister* Luther, please, suh! I wa'n't aimin' to take yo' woman. You jest quit her and went up and divo'ced her in Arkansas—"

Luther gathered that he was in complete control of the situation. "You snake-in-the-grassin' no-good," he roared, indignantly, "you tuck my woman, and den you hit me two times on de jaw! I ain't been to Arkansas, and dat ain't all. I ain't gonter go to Arkansas. I'm stayin' right hyar in dis house, and I'm gonter pick my crop. And when I git dat done, I'm gonter fool around to time to plant me another crop."

Christeen became bewildered. "But, Luther," she protested, "I and Bulger done got married at de commissary, and us is livin' hyar—"

"Yeah?" Luther was sarcastic. "And I and you got married at de cou'thouse, and *us* is livin' hyar, too. And de cou'thouse marryin' is got more stuff dan de commissary marryin'."

"But us can't live hyar in shame," protested Christeen. "I thought you had done gone to Arkansas, and dat's how come I divo'ced you and married wid Bulger. Now I got two husbands, and dat's a shame. De women gonter shame me all over ev'ything."

"Dey sho' gonter," agreed Luther, "and I don't keer."

Suddenly Bulger came to life. "But ef'n I and Christeen," he suggested, "went off up in Arkansas and got married, well, dat'd divo'ce us f'm you, and you c'd live hyar and I and her c'd live anywheres we wants to, and den, wouldn't nobody be shamed."

Luther and Christeen both marveled at the simplicity of Bulger's reasoning. "You got brains in yo' haid, son," Luther admitted. "More gooden dan me. You and Christeen go off up in Arkansas and git divo'ced away f'm me. I'd a thought about dat myse'f, only I ain't got no brains in my haid."

"You's awright, Luther," consoled Bulger. "Only you's too little to git in no fights. I sorry I hit you dem two times on de jaw."

Luther overflowed with generosity. He reached behind him to the mantelpiece and tore down the marriage license and doctor's health certificate. "Hyar," he said. "Y'all kin have my doctor paper and cou'thouse licenses. 'Cause I ain't never gonter git messed up wid no more law marryin's."

"Good ole Luther!" Christeen exclaimed fondly. "You wa'n't much of a husband for a gal like me, but you's plum awright!"

"Well," counseled Luther, "let's don't stand hyar and argy about how good I'm is. Y'all better git yo' bundles and git. De boat gonter pull out for Arkansas quick as dey gits dat wood loaded. And de cap'm needs a rouster."

He watched Christeen and Bulger with paternal fondness while they collected their personal belongings and put them into bundles. He saw Christeen take from a box her wedding dress and look at it longingly.

"You kin take dat dress, Christeen," Luther told her, generously. "I give you dat dress, jest to he'p out my ole friend Bulger. And besides, hit won't be big enough for Della."

HERSELF

BY KATHARINE NEWLIN BURT

FROM *Scribner's*

KATHARINE NEWLIN BURT

is the author of many short stories of high excellence and of a half-dozen novels, among them "Branding Iron" and "Snow Blind." She is the wife of Struthers Burt, the novelist.

NOT to let Mother know . . . not to let Mother know!

Mother's face had a sort of radiance. That was what the little girl feared: fear ran all along her spine and travelled through her blood in separate chilly vessels when she thought of that radiance in Mother's face as it turned toward her. She could see it watching from the window, always shining there, ready to dazzle into a smile, ready to light her little journeyings from this side of the garden to that. She wanted to escape from it, to avoid it. Sometimes she put her arm across her face. Then Mother laughed: "What you hiding from, Poppet?" The little girl would call out, "F'om you, mom," and that was the truth. But it was not a playful truth, it was a serious one. Mother's radiance was terrible.

When she was released from it—for sometimes a caller would come and sometimes a servant for consultation and sometimes Mother would lie down for a little rest—she ran about like a lamed bird, fluttered, sang low, sang shrill, and ended always back of the peony hedge where the sun-flowers grew against the wall. Under the brick wall a ditch had been dug, a dry ditch now, though once it had drained off the garden. It went under an arch. Through this came in that other girl, to whom she had given a quaint name, *Herself*.

Herself, dirty, tangled, rowdy-haired, hoarse-whispering, Herself, who was not afraid, Herself, who knew everything that little girls were not supposed to know. Herself, who liked dirt, the filthier the better, who liked to pull off the butterfly's wings, and who didn't care. She didn't care. She didn't care. Like a worm in the earth, she wriggled about, not caring. She would laugh at God. She would mock Him. She knew things about boys, knew the ugly way that babies come, too ugly and too interesting for Mother to tell. Mother had a pretty story about a stork and angels, pretty clean white fat babies lying asleep on water-lily pads. Pretty. Everything Mother told her was pretty. Heaven. Guardian angels. Even God . . . a big kind man with wings. Sleep was kind. The Dark was a beautiful angel who wrapped you in a loving cloak. That other girl knew better. Sleep was . . . Dreams.

Naughty dreams. You had your own way. You didn't care. The Dark was full of all the Things you had been told not to see. Devils were in the dark. Ghosts. Bloody murderers and whispering thieves. That made life fun. If you didn't care. That other girl said that God was not a kind old man. He forgave you only because Jesus Christ had let men put nails into His hands and feet. That was the price of forgiveness. If it hadn't been for that, He would have sent you into an everlasting fire to roast. And Jesus did it because He had been sent to do it. God liked suffering but Jesus didn't want to die. He cried and prayed. But God forced Him to let Himself be killed. He might have gone away. But God told Him to stay and be scourged and killed. So you were washed in His blood. Did you like to be washed in blood? That was not pretty. But it was exciting. The girl scratched her leg with a big thorn and showed you blood. She smeared it all over. You got it on your face. Blood.

That strange child wanted to come into the house. She was not afraid of Mother. Mother was a liar. Mother was scared. Mother had to pretend that things were pretty. Herself was not scared. Let her come into the house just once. She wanted to make it dirty, please! She wanted to stick out her tongue at Mother. Wanted to say Something Bad. To see how Mother looked. Perhaps Mother would punish her. To be whipped, that was exciting.

In the midst of one of these hidden interviews, Mother would call, "Where are you, precious?" That was the signal to run to meet Mother and kiss her and hug her as though she would never be done . . . close, close, so that Mother might not see the little smear of blood upon her face.

One day that other child followed close and quietly and came into the house. Mother had a long talk with her, took her away into the South Parlor. They were shut in a long time. The child was terrible. Mother whipped her. That made Mother cry, but the child only pretended to cry. She yelled because she was excited and wanted all the house to hear and to admire her. After the whipping she stayed always in the house. Mother was sad, her radiance faded a little but that girl stayed. There were no explanations.

All this drew Mother and her little daughter very close

and made them very dear to each other. They did not talk much about the other child. They tried to forget.

But all the while, instead of forgetting, the loving daughter wondered why she had let a stranger come into the house? Why had she ever let it be seen by Mother? That was the terrible mistake. That was what made life hard. Before that, she had enjoyed knowing the queer, bad girl. It had been a horrid, fascinating sort of secret, an adventure. Now it wasn't that. It was unhappiness and shame. She knew that she should have driven that one away . . . out there by the old ditch. She should never have listened to her wild bad talk. She should not have allowed her to follow into the house.

She wept, "Mother darling, why don't you get rid of that girl?"

Mother stroked the long sleek golden hair.

"I can't do that, my precious, unless you will help me."

"I'll help you, Mother. Let's try."

They tried. They were cruel. They starved her, they left her out long bitter nights in the frosty garden. They hoped that she might run away. All night long the little girl indoors could not sleep, listening to the whimpering thing. She would get up and let her in and the cold stranger would creep into her bed, close under the covers, getting warm.

Mother said, "You are not in earnest about driving away that child. You love her."

"Don't you, Mother?"

Mother shivered. "She is like a child I knew once . . . that's why."

The time came for a good little girl to be sent away to boarding-school to learn how to grow up politely, as all the other good little girls were learning. That was a lovely school filled with the nicest sort of little girls. At boarding-school the daughter was happier than she had ever been except when the longing came upon her for the ease and warmth of home. At such times she wanted Mother and she wanted her old familiar friend and enemy. She was haunted by the hoarse whispering voice, the thick arms and the queer deep-earthy smell. There was a freedom in being with that queer and secret companion not to be found with anyone else in the whole world. . . . *She* was never afraid. The nice girls were afraid, so

were the teachers; they were all pretending that the world was pretty, that children, especially young girls, were very pretty and that womanhood was the prettiest thing of all.

In the middle of the winter, her room-mate fell sick and had to be taken to the infirmary. She missed her dreadfully. There was no one to whisper to after the lights went out. One night, she noticed in her room an earthy smell. She sat up in bed and whispered. Yes, the strange old companion had come. She crept into bed and they went to sleep after a long while in each other's arms.

That newcomer was a terrible danger and an agonizing secret. She kept her hidden away out of sight of teachers and girls. But after a long while she let her best school-friend into the secret. Next, the best friend told a chum. Soon there were about a dozen girls who knew. They would come to her room for secret meetings when, all in the dark, that girl would entertain them. It was exciting. She had the girls quivering, tittering, blushing, thrilled, ashamed. They called these secret meetings, "Ghastly Evenings." The hoarse whisper would tell about the Bloody Murderers and the Grim Gray Ghosts, would describe dreadful tortures of beautiful young men in dungeons miles down under the earth, where rats scuttled and long-legged insects lived. One of the very little girls began to have nightmares. That amused all the others because they had awful dreams too, but being almost as brave as the inventor of the horrible stories, they did not cry out or wake the teachers.

Dolly's nightmares grew worse and worse and at last the little girl had hysterics in the daytime and was sent home. Later came a letter from Dolly's mamma.

The head teacher called for a certain pupil.

"You are one of our nicest girls," she said, "and I can find no fault with you at all. But Dolly has told her mother that there is a girl at school who has been talking to some of you about dreadful things. Dolly says that . . . *you* will know. Now, I have no complaint to make of you. Your deportment has been excellent, so has your scholastic record. The nicest pupils seem to like you, to choose you for a friend. But I must get to the bottom of this. Please tell me, if you can, what Dolly means."

She cried and cried. She didn't say a word about that hid-

den comrade of hers. She just cried and cried. The teacher was grave and kind. She sent the sobbing girl to her room to think it all over and to pray. There, instead of praying, she wrote to Mother and asked to be taken away.

She gave no reason. She just wrote a letter blistered with tears and begged and prayed Mother to take her home . . . before it was too late.

The head teacher said, "I am glad that your mother is taking you away, for I feel that in some mysterious fashion, you have been a bad influence in the school. And yet I can find no fault with you. You are so pretty and so gentle and so good." And she cried and kissed the young girl, stroking her long sleek golden hair.

"Coming out" was the most exciting thing that had ever happened. It meant lovely dresses, dancing, theaters, flowers, competitive girl-friends and young men. She forgot all about that other girl. She was too gay, too busy, and too tired to listen to hoarse whisperings. All the ugly facts were forgotten. There was so much music, such splendid intimate dancing. The young men's bodies were clean and strong, they made her feel clean and strong and quick with bright warm blood. And the music set to its deep pulse-rhythms all that she had really enjoyed of that companion's courage and release from care. It was blessed freedom to be frank and brave, to feel that if life could not be pretty it could be splendid, eager, noisy, real. Physical weariness was better than anything she had yet tasted, it freed her from other preoccupations. Weariness that came from loud laughter, from meaningless shouting, from interminable throbbing of drums and feet, freed her mysteriously from shame, uncleanness, and from fear.

And yet, Mother had never seemed so far away. Mother did not understand the splendid fierce release. She had understood the other trouble, had liked whipping that child and starving her and locking her up. She had liked the shedding of sorrowful, anxious tears on her own little daughter's bright soft hair. But by the dancing and the music and the loud staccato talk Mother was frightened. Something might happen to her child.

When she cut off that lovely shining hair, Mother sobbed,

"My baby is gone. My sweet baby is dead," but the young girl stretched up her long white arms and stretched out her long slim body, hard and supple from laughter and dancing and speeding about by day and night, and felt that the long hair had been a weight and a curtain and that for lack of it her neck was clean and her head proud. That other One was gone, lost . . . dead. She laughed to think of her. But Mother missed that Trouble . . . it had been exciting, terrible, a cause for darling tears.

There was a boy with gray eyes whom she loved. He was an absurd and laugh-provoking boy, a young golliwog with a weird loose-hung beautiful body and a beautiful voice and with a gift for the mimicry of every solemn and portentous grimace in the world. He loved her body and he told her so.

"It fits," he said, "but I haven't the money to buy it from you. Have you any money?"

She had no money. Mother told her she could have none for years and years and years. She must marry a man who was able to stand on his own feet and to make his way in the world. The boy's father, who did have money, said, "Boy must begin at the bottom of the ladder just as I did. He can't afford to marry for years and years."

The boy kissed her, when she cried. She loved him and he loved her. They told the world. Her mother said, "Wait." The boy's father said, "Wait."

They waited and they danced and their passion presently turned to quarreling and tears and hate. They knew what would cure his nervous quarreling but they were afraid.

It was then that the other girl came back.

Rather than let the boy meet with this creature, she told him never to see her again. He said, "Right," and walked away from her. He went all the way down the hall to the front door. She stood between the curtains of the drawing room. His moving feet pulled tight cords on her heart.

"You are a damn fool," said that other girl, roughly, loudly.

To hide the slattern with her bold eyes, her rough hair, and her thick red mouth, the sleek and golden daughter of the house drew the two curtains all about her.

But the boy whirled like a top.

"By God! You've said it! That's the girl I want."

He came back and tore her from the curtains. There she stood, that other girl, laughing like a fish-wife.

But the shamed child who loved him ran away and hid. And she would never see the gray-eyed boy again. He did not want to come back after that night. He had been frightened and disgusted. He had liked more than anything else the cleanness that was hers. It was the cleanness and the strength of her beautiful body that had made it "fit."

Then the right man came along.

She knew at once that he was the right man because he matched with all the Pretty Things, with guardian angels and the Big Kind Man with Wings. Mother was so pleased with him. He was thirty-seven years old—seventeen years older than she was—and when she was with him it was like being with the memory of her father, tender and kind, stolen from that first right in him which Mother had had, and this made her heart beat with a secret triumph. And he was handsome in a close-knit, level way, strong without any of the boy's weird suppleness. Oh, how hard she tried to please this older man! She had never taken so much trouble. She would watch his face for every brightness of approval, for every shadow of distaste. She studied to be the Ideal Woman. She drew him out on the subject of the Ideal Woman. He was very strong in his disapproval of the modern girl. She tried not to be a modern girl. She tried to wear the dresses he approved, the colors he preferred. She would not smoke cigarettes, nor drink cocktails. She danced a foot away from every partner. She would not flirt, nor "pet," nor stay out late.

Mother and she drew very close together again. The girl that this man loved and Mother's precious girl were so alike. It was a going back to the old days when Mother and she had had so many good crying times together, when they had tried to drive the other girl away. This older man even wanted her to grow the sleek bright hair. "You are really an old-fashioned little girl. You have an old-fashioned little face," he said, "a sweet, old-fashioned, rosebud girl, that's what you are and how I love you for it!"

When this older man kissed her, she felt small and shy and flattered. She didn't want to kiss back. She wanted to be kissed and petted tenderly.

This man had two fortunes, one that he had inherited from his grandfather and one that he had made himself in the Tea and Coffee business. So nobody said, "Wait." They were soon engaged to be married and she wore a great blue sapphire. The ring seemed as heavy as an iron belt. Asleep she dreamed that it was welded about her hips and woke up screaming. But she was proud of the big heavy ring on her thin brown finger.

The other girl said, creeping in under the covers, "When you marry this man, I'm coming to live with you."

She began to be terribly unhappy. Would her fiancé be willing to marry her if he knew that another woman must come to live with them? Night after night the poor girl lay awake trying to persuade the companion of whom she was ashamed to let her go alone and free into the new life. But that one, unashamed, just held her tightly with her thick hard arms and laughed.

The next afternoon, sitting beside her lover on the drawing-room sofa, she told him all about her foster sister, all that she could remember from the first remembered meeting.

And this wise, brave man drew the trembling confessor into his arms—thick and strong they felt, like another pair—and kissed her shining head.

"As if I couldn't take care of the two of you! We'll tame that naughty girl. I'm strong enough to keep her in her place. She shall come and live with me in my house and if she doesn't learn to be a little lady, I'll beat the life out of her, eh? Shall I?"

"Oh, how I wish you would!" But, in her heart she knew that the "naughty girl" was very strong, stronger than this man, much too strong for him.

When she came to live with them after they were married the other girl filled the master of the house with loathing. But his eyes glistened as he watched her.

"This is not a nice woman," he would say. "This is not an old-fashioned rosebud girl at all. But neither is she the Modern Girl. I don't know where she came from. She reminds me of things I have read. I think there is something about her in the Bible. A strange woman . . . a strange woman. How coarse she is! She makes me shudder. I am ill for looking at her." But all the while, his eyes glistened as he talked of her.

He tried to change and to subdue her. This, indeed, became the great preoccupation of his life. And it increased her sense of importance. She pretended to begin to reform, pretended to be more like the sweet girl that this man loved. She stole the bridal clothes and changed them daringly, used powder and paint and perfume above her uncleanliness and stuck false, gilded flowers in her wild hair.

Now, the young wife began to hate this companion with bitterness and fear. Because, while he was trying to reform her, the man she had married was not the man she loved. He lost his tenderness, his gentle, reverent ways. She could not love the grim, fierce tyrant with glittering eyes who thought that he was more than a match for any woman.

Sometimes, it is true, he would admit uneasiness. "This woman is very strong," he would say, "but," pulling all his muscles tight in the hands of his masculine will, "we will get the best of her, my poor sweet love."

At such moments, of doubt and of dependence, his wife loved him again with a deep, new love, warmer and more embracing than any emotion she had ever felt in all her life. Under its influence he would really ignore the other woman. But, after she had cried for nights and days, neglected and alone, the husband would give heed to her again. He would be sure of his strength. He would begin to laugh at his own humility. After such discipline the woman would be very cunning. She had wiles and ways. And the husband, though he dared not admit it, was wild with a queer, fevered delight, to be again in conflict.

So, pretending to be the slave of this man, pretending that soon, very soon he would be altogether master, the woman began more openly to exercise her power. She actually began to appear before some of their friends, entertained them, scared and obsessed them with her terrible unmasculine, unfeminine freedom from care and fear. Just as she had got around Mother and the nice girls at school, so now she began to get around their friends. "I-don't-care . . . don't-care . . . don't-care. . . ." Like a worm in the earth she wriggled about their drawing room, not caring. Laughing at laws and fears; at pretty stories and at God. At first she would laugh up her sleeve but later when everyone was used to her boldness, she began to laugh more openly. Then the friends grew bolder

too. They always said that they came to the house to see its gentle mistress, but their mood was like her husband's or her own at school. The women admired that creature for her courage and the men were obsessed by their desire to overcome her. They wanted to get the best of her, to be her master. And this they could not do because they were afraid. The woman was so much stronger than they were. She captured them because they were excited by her "don't care . . . don't care" which beat with the rhythm of a drum in all her words, her movements and her pulses.

Now, when the thick strong arms of her old companion were flung about her neck, the poor girl would weep helplessly and tremble. That deep-earthy smell was like the odor of a grave.

She had a child. At the first cry of that weak life, the outsider fled away, stopping up her ears as though, at last, she were afraid.

Such happiness came into the clean free house. The father was radiant. He looked like a young knight. He was proud and sweet. He was gay and tender. He would kneel beside her bed and play with his daughter's tiny, dampish fingers.

They felt that their happiness was safe forever.

Gradually they grew accustomed to their fatherhood and motherhood and the baby ceased to be a miracle. But its care became more and more absorbing of attention. Day and night, the mother could think only of her baby: its health and cleanliness, its charming sleep and its entrancing wakefulness. She talked to her husband of nothing else. The rest of her life was just a vague sort of interruption, something that kept her away from Baby, a troublesome fog through which she felt her path back as soon as might be to her child.

It did not occur to her that her husband could not share this profound preoccupation, that he might feel neglected and alone. He was still very tender and kind. But he began to be restless, active, gay. He wanted to go out, to play with his old friends, to make new friends. He wanted "parties," to go to them, to give them. She was dreadfully bothered and bored. She was far too much interested in the baby to care for other people, far too tired and too tied-down by hours of feeding, waking, sleeping, to want to go to parties. So, after a

fretful while, during which he coaxed and grumbled, he began to go about alone.

For a time the young wife was relieved, then she began to be alarmed. He was so rarely at home and when he was there he was preoccupied, gently indulgent to her and to the baby but always humming or whistling dance-tunes, song-tunes, under his breath.

"This is the way husbands are lost," she said to her own mind, "but what am I to do? Baby is so important and so exciting. I wish there were two of me, one to care happily for Baby and one to entertain and interest my husband, make him want to come home and to stay home, make him afraid to run away." And, for the first time in more than a year, she thought of someone else . . . someone who had gone away in dread of motherhood.

She was alone in the house that night and Baby was asleep. From some other house a short distance away, there came the sound of jungle music, monotonous as heart-beats. It was a sultry, heavy night. Once in a while, a gusty, tired wind leaped up and fell again . . . earth-bound.

She opened her door and stepped out into the soft thickness of the garden. There was not a star. The night was even, black and dense against her face. It might have been a vast piece of rich cloth; it might have been the black, thick breast of a colored Mammy. She felt that she could have pushed it away with her hands. The music sounded louder, nearer, but, except when the wind bounded up wearily and dropped, there was no other sound at all.

She moved a few steps forward through the dark, which seemed to move too with her to give her space and breath. She waited, trying to think. It would be easier to call back this old familiar than to neglect the baby and to run about to parties and to give parties with her husband . . . easier, less fatiguing, less of a strain. She could stay at home and her husband would stay at home too. She knew that he would be excited by the return of his rebel and his temptress. He wanted her back—secretly, perhaps. Maybe it was in search of her that he ran about from one party to another.

She raised her voice as the wind lifted itself languidly and the trees sighed just once.

She called the name fearfully, for it was a fearful name. No one answered. No one came. She felt suddenly very lonely and very much afraid. She ran back into the house and locked the glass door.

She turned on all the lights and sat down to play on the piano. She could not drown that other music, playing louder as though the orchestra had come out upon the terrace.

There came the sound of a slow footstep out there in the throbbing dark.

Up she jumped, her heart shaking, unlocked the door and let the wind flow past her, warm and wild and deep-earthy into the empty room.

The master of that house was not glad to see the woman who returned. He was angry and alarmed. Besides, she had changed. She was dull and sullen. A certain bitter quality had entered into her carelessness so that she was less unselfconscious, less alive. But she had all her terrible freedom from fear, her don't-care, don't-care. It was less wild, to be sure, less childish and more dangerous. She was less unclean, not quite so deep-earthy. She had the dull, dazed look of someone who has slept the clock around in a dark place and is not yet awake.

Nevertheless, though he resented her return and gave her a sour contemptuous greeting, it was easy to see that he was interested, even flattered. He did not guess that she had been deliberately called back for his detention. He fancied that the strange bold creature had returned of her own accord because of the lure of his masterfulness, his power over her dreadful strength.

Now, for a while he *was* her master. He could do with her just what he wanted. He could humiliate her at will. She dressed as he commanded, danced and sang, played or was silent at his wish.

And, though the mother loathed what she saw and could not love the man in his rôle of master, she was pleased with the success of her plan. For her husband soon lost interest in parties and stayed in his own home, to finish forever with the taming of that woman who had come back.

Little by little, she showed her old vigor. Little by little, she asserted her freedom from love and fear. She mocked her

master's God and wriggling about his hearth like a snake she flickered her tongue across the faces of his household idols.

He began to realize that she was not tamed after all, this mocking helot, and he was very angry, very cruel. And more and more enslaved.

She was now the gay and restless one. She insisted upon seeing and entertaining friends. The man had begun to bore her. The house was filled with feverish noise and laughter. It seemed as though its master were afraid to do anything to displease the woman.

His wife stopped her ears. She tried to ignore and to forget. But the tumult, with the contempt and secret anger that it caused her, made her unable to sleep or to care properly for the child. So the child fell sick.

She nursed it day and night and then, the baby being better, she was terribly, terribly tired.

In all her life she had never been so tired. It was like a loosening of the bonds of life. There was no courage in her and no looking forward. It was a longing to be done with the effort that is called life.

Even the baby had ceased to interest her. She was tired of the baby because, more than anything else, it was her life.

The other woman was giving a party. The guests were about to arrive. In one of those borrowed dresses, cut low in the back so that she could struggle into it, she moved about the upstairs rooms singing, hoarse and deep, below her breath. Her massive hips looked as though they would burst through the satin dress below the dreadful suppleness of her long waist. The upper part of her body swayed like the stalk of a tall swamp flower, but below, her body was a root. She seemed to pull it up with an effort when she moved: lightly swaying above, plunging and swinging heavily below, this body in motion had the rhythm of quick notes and of slow—two contrary rhythms yoked together, fascinating, bewildering to watch. One listened to her as she moved.

The mother dropped near her sleeping baby's crib, so heavy were her eyes that the baby's face was in a mist. It would be impossible to keep awake and give the little one her midnight medicine. The other woman must do it, must come up from the party . . . must remember . . . ten drops in water, ten drops in water. . . . She must not forget.

So that weary mother went as far away from life as possible and fell down there and shut out the sound of throbbing music, of loud laughter and of gritting, pounding feet, the sound of Baby's fretting and wailing, the sound of life. It was not sleep that came to her that night. It was a long swoon, a complete oblivion.

And the music lasted, beat on, the feet shook the house, made its floors vibrate and its walls tremble, as though it had come to life, had pulses, veins or climbing sap, as though it were growing in a jungle and moved to the passing by of beast pads in a tropic night.

The woman drank to encourage her guests, to free the man and his friends from fear. To-night no one must be afraid. Everyone must laugh as she laughed, must shout and mock. They must forget God and Death and Pretty Things. Life must be what she knew it was: a dirty, splendid, careless, aimless, deathless worm, something that was untroubled by the distance between the stars.

Above the perfume of flowers, the aroma of wine, the pungency of smoke, the house was filled with the deep-earthy odor of her courage.

At midnight this woman came into the nursery. She flapped to and fro like a bat in the nursery. When she took the little medicine bottle, she lifted it as though it had been a flagon filled with molten lead. And she poured out the medicine into a glass, counting, "one-two-three" but not dropping, pouring all the while. She forced the pungent dose down the baby's throat. It choked at first, then began to moan.

Back the woman went again to her party. She napped and bounded down the wide, polished stairs, singing her song.

The party lasted until broad day. Sun came in at the eastern windows. The servants were scared by what they saw.

It was the cessation of all noise that woke the baby's mother. She felt very clear in the head and dry and light. Her first thought was for her little girl and she sped back to the nursery along the halls and down the stairs.

The baby lay in its crib with the sun in its face. It was quite blue and very cold.

She screamed aloud, ran to the bottle and saw what had been done. She caught up the baby. It was not dead. Its tiny

heart moved weakly at long intervals and its breath fluttered, paused, fluttered again just like an insect that will die.

Holding the fragile thing to her breast, she flew down the stairs, calling for her husband. Through the torn and distracted rooms she went, calling, seeking. Everywhere lay shattered glass, scattered flowers, broken food, and spilled wine. A guest lay asleep, half on a sofa, half on the floor. Delicate chairs had been overturned. A tall clock had been pulled out into the middle of the room and some woman had tied her girdle about it and stuck a man's hat over its bland face. It was still talking its solemn nonsense: TICK TACK. It was a Grandfather's Clock.

The baby's father, asleep among some cushions on a couch, woke to the sound of her keening, to her icy grasp.

Slowly he understood: the baby was dying, dying. It had been given an overdose of the doctor's powerful drug. Send for that doctor quickly, quickly, she cried, using all the names she had for their old tenderness, calling him her lover, her husband, Baby's father! Send for that doctor, please.

They rang and rang at the telephone and at last the doctor came.

The father, bluish-white, dishevelled in his dress-clothes, the mother, waxen pale in her blue wrapper and her hanging, golden hair, waited upon his verdict.

"She may live. She may. There's a specialist . . ."

"For God's love, where is the specialist?"

The specialist was not very close at hand but the father set out at once to get him. He would go by airplane and by airplane they would come back, the specialist and he. They would be back before sunset.

"You won't be in time, I fear," the doctor whispered to him. "But it is better to travel than to wait, it is better to try than to give up. That is why I told you about this man. I'll stay with your poor wife and do what can be done. The man has a new way."

The servants set the house in order. They whispered about these people and their friends all day as they set the house in order and ran about getting little things for the doctor and for their mistress.

The baby lived, the baby still lived. The doctor would not let her die. He sat there beside the crib, not letting her die,

pushing away Death with his clever hands. "I wish that man would come," he said at twilight. "I want you to leave the nursery now, you tired mother, and go away somewhere. I will call you if . . . I must."

She went away.

She went downstairs in the twilight and lifted the rug from that other woman, where she lay, still deep in a drunken slumber, flushed and limp. The mother said, "You are a murderess. I condemn you. I sentence you. I will execute you before my husband comes back."

She brought down a narcotic from the medicine closet in her husband's bathroom.

"You gave my baby an overdose," said the mother sternly. "Now let us see what an overdose will do for you. You are trying to wake up. I see you twitching. Your heavy hands are awake. You shall not open your eyes again. You shall never again see my husband nor my child."

She poured out the drug. She poured the narcotic down the gullet of the woman. And the thick hand stopped moving, the flush faded, there was no twitching at the coat-sleeve of consciousness.

When that body was deeply, deeply drugged, she took it by the shoulders and dragged it out of the house.

It was almost night already. Fireflies came in and out silently at different levels in the still tall air. She dragged the unconscious body across the flower-beds and the turf and along the paths to the farthest corner of the garden behind some bushes under the brick wall. And there she dug a deep grave. For hours she dug, patiently, strongly, dug the deepest grave ever dug by a woman for the body of a woman. And into it she rolled that body. It fell and turned over with its face in the damp earth. And she buried it alive.

She tramped down the dirt and trampled down the sod until it fitted tight and smooth above the drugged and smothered woman.

"I know you are not dead," said the woman who stood above and saw that there were little white stars now in the garden. "I know that you are not dead. But you are buried under the earth and the earth is the only thing as heavy and as strong as you are. If you climb up out of the earth again you must be weak and changed."

She went back into the house.

The specialist had come and was working over the baby. They would not let her come into the room.

She went to her bed and lay under the sheet, wet and shivering. All night she was not called. She lay awake, shivering and wet.

She found that she thought long, long thoughts about a strange bold child who years ago had crawled into her garden by the dry ditch beneath the wall. Was she sorry for that creature whom she had buried alive? Had she ever loved her at all? Before hate began, had she loved that companion of her guilty loneliness a little? Could she have loved her more?

Too late. Too late now, she told her shivering heart. That girl is buried in the garden, she cannot breathe. Her mouth is in the earth. She has gone back to the earth. Too late to laugh, too late to love, too late to understand. But . . . how strong she had been! How brave!

Her husband came and stood beside her. He was pale, ashamed, exalted. There were tears upon him.

"The baby is alive . . . will live," he said.

He wept with his head upon his wife's sick breast.

He never asked a single question about the other woman. At first he did not even seem to notice that she was no longer there. But, after a time, he began to look furtively about the house, as though he had lost something. His wife smiled to her own heart. Let him look. Oh, let him look. He saw her smile and his eyes were hurt and secretive and frightened, but he could not help looking for what was lost.

He went out into the garden. Every night when the dark stood up amongst the trees and the wind blew and he heard the jungle music from the Inn, he would go as though absently into the garden and she would hear him wandering about, looking for someone. She would then play the piano loudly, scornfully, in triumph. She knew that he would never find the other woman. Sometimes when he thought the trees were loud enough in the wind to cover the sound of his voice, he called softly. He called a name. His voice was fearful and full of pain. She played louder than the trees were roaring to drown her husband's troubled, calling voice.

Then he began to search in the lanes and in the town. If he

saw someone that looked a little like that woman he would follow her home and question her. His wife did not care. She knew that he could never find what he looked for and that he could never be satisfied. He might fancy a resemblance but that would only sharpen his longing for the original, his longing and his fear. So she was serene and cool and patient. Some day he would be tired of searching. He would give up.

But he began to travel through the world. He went on business trips to distant countries and he was sad to go. He would kiss his wife and his daughter tenderly. She knew that he was still looking, still searching for what was lost.

When he came home he would be kind and gentle. She loved him faithfully and sadly. She was satisfied because she had buried that woman so deeply in the earth. She found life tranquil, serene, and she was more and more absorbed in the health and the joy of the little growing girl, soothed by the intermittent presence of the man she loved. It was enough for her now that he was a kind father and a tender husband . . . when he was at home. Let him search, let him search the whole world over until he should be tired. She would not let her heart be troubled by that long, vain, secret search.

She was happiest when she sat in her window and watched the child playing in the garden. How pretty and graceful the little creature was with her light limbs and spreading, flying hair! It was beautiful to see her dance and run, singing high, singing low, and hiding from Mother, to jump out with a Boo and a cataract of mirth.

One afternoon, the mother had gone out upon an errand and came in late. Her arms were hungry for the child. She ran up to the nursery. It was empty. The house was all empty and out in the garden it was already dusk. The wind was blowing a little now and then. She went to the door which opened from the drawing room to the garden and called . . . "My Pet! My Pet!"

The child came running like a little hungry dog, threw herself bodily against her mother, hugged her close, close, close, kissed her as though she would never be done.

"My Mummy. My pretty Mum. I'm so glad that you are home."

And the mother, holding her off a little, looked down and saw a tiny smear of blood on the child's rosy face.

FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY

BY IRVIN S. COBB

FROM *Cosmopolitan*

IRVIN S. COBB

is honored as America's most beloved humorist, but he is also a writer of short stories that in their quiet and tragic intensity show the economy of the great craftsman. Among them are "Snake Doctor," which won the first O. Henry Memorial Prize in 1922, and "An Episode at Pintail Lake."

JUST outside a sizable New Mexico town the second section of the fast through train coming from the Coast made a short halt. Entering the stretch leading to the yards, the engineer had found the signal set against him; the track ahead was temporarily blocked.

It was a small delay though. Almost at once the semaphore like the finger of a mechanical wizard made the warning red light vanish and a green light appear instead; so, at that, the Limited got under way and rolled on into the station for her regular stop.

But before she started up, four travelers quitted her. They got out on the off side, the side farthest away from the town, and that probably explains why none of the crew and none of the other passengers saw them getting out. It helps also to explain why they were not missed until quite some time later.

Their manner of leaving her was decidedly unusual. First, one of the vestibule doors between the third sleeping car and the fourth sleeping car opened and the trap in the floor flipped up briskly, under the pressure of an impatient foot on the operating lever. A brace of the departing ones came swiftly into view, one behind the other. True, there was nothing unusual about that. But as they stepped down on the earth they faced about and received the figure of a third person whose limbs dangled and whose head lolled back as they took the dead weight of him into their arms. Next there emerged the fourth and last member of the group, he being the one who had eased the limp figure of Number Three down the car steps into the grasp of his associates.

For a fractional space their shapes made a little huddle in the lee of the vestibule. Looking on, you might have guessed that there was a momentary period of indecision touching on the next step to be taken.

However, this muddle—if that was what it was—right away straightened itself out. Acting with movements which seemed difficult and awkward, the two burden-bearers

carried their unconscious load down the short embankment and deposited it on the cindery underfooting close against the flank of the slightly built-up right of way.

Number Four bent over the sprawled form and fumbled at it, shoving his hands into first one pocket and then another. In half a minute or less he straightened up and spoke to the remaining pair, at the same time using both hands to shove some article inside the vent of his waistcoat.

"I have got them," he said, speaking with a foreign accent. They pressed toward him, their hands extended.

"Not here and not yet, Señores," he said sharply. "First we make sure of the rest. First you do, please, as I do."

Thereupon he hopped nimbly up the shoulder of the road-bed and headed toward the rear of the halted train, slinking well in under the overhang of the Pullmans. His mates obeyed his example. They kept on until they had passed the tail coach, which was a combination coach, and then they stepped inward between the rails, still maintaining their single-file formation. Immediately the dusk swallowed them up.

There was something peculiar about the way each one of these three plodding pedestrians bore himself. The peculiarity was this: He bore himself like a person engaged in prayer—in a silent perambulating act of piety. His head was tucked in, his face turning neither to the right nor left; his eyes were set steadfastly forward as though upon some invisible goal, his hands clasped primly together in front of him.

Thus and so the marching three plodded on until the train, having got in motion, was out of sight beyond a curve in the approach to the station. Then they checked and came together in a clump, and then, had you been there, you would have understood the reason for their devotional pose. All three of them were wearing handcuffs.

The man who had spoken before unpalmed a key ring which he was carrying. Working swiftly even in the half-darkness, he made tests of the keys on the ring until he found the proper keys. He freed the wrists of his two fellows. Then one of them took the keys and unlocked his set of bracelets for him.

He, it would seem, was the most forethoughted of the trio. With his heel he kicked shallow gouges in the gritty soil beside the track and buried the handcuffs therein.

After that they briefly confabbed together, and the upshot

of the confab was that, having matched for the possession of some object evidently held to be of great value, they separated forces.

One man set off alone on a detour to the southeast, which would carry him around the town. His late companions kept on in a general westerly direction, heading toward the desert which all that day they had been traversing. They footed it fast, as men might foot it who were fleeing for their lives and yet must conserve their strength. As a matter of fact, they were fleeing for their lives. So likewise the one from whom they had just parted was fleeing for his life.

It was partly by chance that these three had been making the transcontinental journey in company. Two of them, Lafitte the Frenchman, and Verdi the Italian who had Anglicized his name and called himself Green, met while lying in jail at San Francisco awaiting deportation to their respective countries. Within a space of a month each had been arrested as a refugee from justice; the formalities for extraditing the pair of them were swiftly completed.

So, to save trouble and expense; to kill, as it were, two birds with one stone, the authorities decided to send them together across to the eastern seaboard where, according to arrangements made by cable, they would be surrendered to police representatives coming from abroad to receive them and transport them back overseas. For the long trip to New York a couple of city detectives had them in custody.

When the train bearing the officers and their charges reached a junction in lower California where the main line connected with a branch line running south to the Mexican border, there came aboard a special agent of the Department of Justice who had with him a prisoner.

This prisoner was one Manuel Gaza, a Spaniard. He also recently had been captured and identified; and he also was destined for return to his own land. It was not by prior agreement that he had been retransferred at this junction point to the same train which carried the Italian and the Frenchman. It just happened so.

It having happened so, the man who had Gaza in tow lost no time in getting acquainted with his San Francisco brethren. For a number of reasons it seemed expedient to all the officers that from here on they should travel as a unit. Ac-

cordingly the special agent talked with the Pullman conductor and exchanged the reservations he previously had booked for a compartment adjoining the drawing-room in which the four from the city were riding.

It was on a Friday afternoon that the parties united. Friday evening, at the first call for dinner, the three officers herded their three prisoners forward to the dining car, the passage of the sextet through the aisles causing some small commotion. Their advent into the diner created another little sensation.

Since it was difficult for the handcuffed aliens to handle knife and fork, they were given such food as might readily be eaten with a spoon or with the fingers—soups and omelets and soft vegetables and pie or rice pudding. The detectives ate fish. They shared between them a double order of imported kippers.

Presumably they were the only persons on the train who that day had chosen the kippered herrings. Shortly, the special agent was giving private thanks that his church prescribed no dietetic regulations for Friday, because within an hour or two after leaving the table, the San Francisco men were suffering from violent cramps—ptomaine poison had them helpless.

One seemed to be dangerously ill. That night near the border between California and Arizona he was taken off the train and carried to a hospital. During the wait at the station, a local physician dosed the second and lesser sufferer, whose name was McAvoy, and when he had been somewhat relieved, the doctor gave him a shot of something in the arm and said he ought to be up and about within twenty-four hours.

Through the night McAvoy slept in the lower berth of the compartment and the special agent sat up, with the communicating door open, to guard the aliens, who were bedded in the so-called drawing-room.

Their irons stayed on their wrists; their lone warden was accepting no foolish odds against himself. He had taken the precaution to transfer the keys of the Frenchman's handcuffs and the Italian's handcuffs from McAvoy's keeping to his own, slipping them on his key ring, but this had been done in case McAvoy should become seriously ill en route and it

should devolve upon him to make a lap of the journey single-handed.

Next morning McAvoy was much easier but he felt weak, he said, and drowsy. Given a full twelve hours of rest, though, he thought he would be able to go on guard when the nightfall came.

So he lay in his berth, and the special agent occupied an end of the drawing-room sofa. The trapped fugitives sat smoking cigarets, and when the officer was not too near, talking among themselves.

Mainly they talked in English, a language which Gaza the Spaniard and Lafitte the Frenchman spoke fairly well. Verdi or Green, as the case might be, had little English at his command but Gaza, who had spent three years in Naples, spoke Italian; and so when Verdi used his own tongue, Gaza could interpret for the Frenchman's benefit. They were allowed to quit the drawing-room only for meals.

When dinner hour came on that second evening of their trip, McAvoy was in a doze. So the Department of Justice man did not disturb him.

"Come on, boys," he said to the three aliens; "time to eat again."

He lined them up in front of him in the corridor and they started the regular processional. It was just at that moment that the train broke its rhythmic refrain and began to clack and creak and slow for that unscheduled stop outside that New Mexico town. By the time they had reached the second car on ahead, she'd almost stopped and was lurching and jerking.

In the vestibule beyond that second car the special agent was in the act of stepping across the iron floor lip of the connection when a particularly brisk joggle caused him to lose his hat. He gave a small exclamation and bent to recover it. Doing so, he jostled Gaza, the third man in the line and therefore the next to him.

The agile Spaniard was quick to seize his chance. He half turned, and bringing his chained wrists aloft, sent them down with all his might on the poll of the officer's unprotected skull. The victim of the assault never made a sound—just spraddled on his face and was dead to the world.

No outsider had been witness to the assault. No outsider

came along during the few seconds which were required by the late prisoners to open an off-side car door and make their escape after the fashion which already has been described for you. Nobody missed them—for quite a while nobody did.

It wasn't until nearly nine o'clock, when McAvoy had roused up and rung for the porter and begun to ask questions, that a search was made and an alarm raised.

Penned up together through that day, the aliens had matched stories, one story against another. A common plight made them communicative; a common peril caused each to turn with morbid reiteration to his own fatal predicament.

Said the Frenchman to the Spaniard: "He"—indicating his recent cellmate, the Italian—"he knows how with me it stands. With him, I have talked. He speaks not so well the English but sometimes he understands it. Now you shall hear and judge for yourself how bad my situation is."

Graphically, this criminal sketched his past. He had been a Marseilles dock hand. He had killed a woman. She deserved killing, so he killed her. He had been caught, tried, convicted, condemned. While lying in prison, with execution day only a few weeks distant, he had made a get-away.

In disguise he had reached America and here had stayed three years. Then another woman, in a fit of jealousy, betrayed him to the police. He had been living with that woman; to her he had given his confidence. It would appear that women had been his undoing.

"Me, I am as good as dead already. And what a death!" A spasm of shuddering possessed him. "For me the guillotine is waiting. The devil invented it. It is so they go at you with that machine: They strap you flat upon a board. Face downward you are, but you can look up, you can see—that is the worst part. They fit your throat into a grooved shutter; they make it fast. You bring your head back; your eyes are drawn upward, fascinated. Above you, waiting, ready, poised, your eyes see the—the knife."

"But only for a moment do you see it, my friend," said the Spaniard, in the tone of one offering comfort. "Only a moment and then—*pouff*—all over!"

"A moment! I tell you it is an eternity. It must be an eternity. Lying there, you must live a hundred lives, you must

die a hundred deaths. And then to have your head taken off your body, to be all at once in two pieces. Me, I am not afraid of most deaths. But that death by the guillotine—ah-h!"

The Spaniard bent forward. He was sitting alone facing the other two, who shared a seat.

"Listen, Señor," he stated. "Compared with me, you are the lucky one. True, I have not yet been tried—before they could try me I fled away out of that accursed Spain of mine."

"Not tried, eh?" broke in the Frenchman. "Then you have yet a loophole—a chance for escape; and I have none. My trial, as I told you, is behind me."

"You do not know the Spanish courts. It is plain you do not, since you say that," declared the Spaniard. "Those courts—they are greedy for blood. With them, to my kind, there is not mercy; there is only punishment.

"And such a punishment! Wait until you hear. To me when they get me before them they will say: 'The proof is clear against you; the evidence has been thus and so. You are adjudged guilty. You took a life, so your life must be taken. It is the law."

"Perhaps I say: 'Yes, but that life I took swiftly and in passion and for cause. For that one the end came in an instant, without pain, without lingering, yes, without warning. Since I must pay for it, why cannot I also be made to die very quickly without pain?'

"Will they listen? No, they send me to the garrote. To a great strong chair they tie you—your hands, your feet, your trunk. Your head is against a post, an upright. In that post is a collar—an iron band. They fit that collar about your neck. Then from behind you the executioner turns a screw.

"If he chooses he turns it slowly. The collar tightens, tightens; a knob presses into your spine. You begin to strangle. Oh, I have seen it myself! I know. You expire by inches! I am a brave man, Señores. When one's time comes, one dies. But oh, Señores, if it were any death but that! Better the guillotine than that! Better anything than that!"

He slumped back against the cushions, and rigors passed through him.

It was the Italian's turn. "I was tried in my absence," he explained to the Spaniard. "I was not even there to make my

defense—I had thought it expedient to depart. Such is the custom of the courts in my country. They try you behind your back.

"They found me guilty, those judges. In Italy there is no capital punishment, so they sentenced me to life imprisonment. It is to that—that—I now return."

The Spaniard lifted his shoulders; the lifting was eloquent of his meaning.

"Not so fast," said the Italian. "You tell me you lived once in Italy. Have you forgotten what life imprisonment for certain acts means in Italy? It means solitary confinement. It means you are buried alive. They shut you away from everyone in a tight cell. It is a tomb, that is all. You see no one ever; you hear no voice ever. If you cry out, no one answers. Silence, darkness, darkness, silence, until you go mad or die.

"Can you picture what that means to one of my race, to an Italian who must have music, sunshine, talk with his fellows, sight of his fellows? It is in his nature—he must have these things or he is in torture, in constant and everlasting torment. Every hour becomes to him a year, every day a century, until his brain bursts asunder inside his skull.

"Oh, they knew—those fiends who devised this thing—what to an Italian is a million times worse than death—any death. I am the most unfortunate one of the three of us. My penalty is the most dreadful by far."

The others would not have it so. They argued the point with him and with each other all through the day, and twilight found their beliefs unshaken.

Then, under the Spaniard's leadership, came their deliverance out of captivity. It was he who, on the toss-up, won the revolver which they had taken from the person of the senseless special agent. Also it was he who suggested to the Italian that for the time being, at least, they stick together. To this the Italian had agreed, the Marseilles man Lafitte already having elected to go on his own.

After the latter, heading east by south, had left them, the Spaniard said reflectively:

"He is optimistic, that one, for all that he seemed so gloomy and downhearted to-day when speaking of that guillotine of his. He said he now had faith that he would yet dodge

his fate. Five minutes after he is off that train he speaks of faith!"

"I cannot go quite so far," answered the Italian. "We are free, but for us there will be still a thousand dangers. So I have not much faith, but I have hope. And you, my friend?"

The Spaniard shrugged his shoulders. His shrug might mean yes or it might mean no. Perhaps he needed his breath. He was going at a jog-trot down the tracks, the Italian alongside him.

Take the man who had faith. Set down as he was in a country utterly strange to him, this one of the fugitives nevertheless made steady progress. He got safely around and by the New Mexico town. He hid in the chaparral until daybreak, then took to a highway running parallel with the railroad.

A "tin-canner," which is what they were beginning to call an itinerant motor tourist in those parts, overtook him soon after sunup and gave him a lift to a small way station some forty miles down the line. There he boarded a local train—he had some money on him; not much money but enough—and undetected, he rode that train clear on through to its destination a hundred miles or so farther along.

Other local trains carried him across a corner of Colorado and clear across Kansas. Some forty-eight hours later, he was a guest in a third-rate hotel on a back street in Kansas City, Missouri.

He stayed in that hotel for two days and two nights, biding most of the time in his room on the top floor of the six-story building, going down only for his meals and for newspapers. The food he had to have; the newspapers gave him information, of a sort, of the hunt for the three fugitives. It was repeatedly stated that all three were believed to be fleeing together. That cheered Lafitte very much. It strengthened his faith.

But on the morning of his third day in this cheap hotel, when he came out of his room and went down the hall to ring for the elevator—there was only one passenger elevator in this hotel—he saw something. Passing the head of the stairs, which ended approximately midway of the stretch between the door of his room and the wattled iron door opening on the

elevator well, he saw, out of the corner of one watchful eye, two men in civilian garb on the steps below him.

They had halted there. Whether they were coming up or going down there was no way of telling. It seemed to him that at sight of him they ducked slightly and made as if to flatten themselves back against the side wall.

He gave no sign of having seen them. He stilled an impulse to make a dash for it. Where was he to dash for, with the stairs cut off? He followed the only course open to him. Anyhow he told himself he might be wrong. Perhaps his nerves were misbehaving. Perhaps those two who seemed to be lurking just there behind him on those steps were not interested in him at all. He kept telling himself that, while he was ringing the bell, while he was waiting for the car to come up for him.

The car did come up and, for a wonder, promptly; an old-fashioned car, creaky, musty. Except for its shirt-sleeved attendant, it was empty. As Lafitte stepped in, he glanced sideways over his shoulder, making the movement casual—no sight of those two fellows.

He rode down, the only passenger for that trip, so there were no stops on the descent. They reached the ground floor, which was the office floor. The elevator came to a standstill, then moved up a foot or so, then joltingly down six inches or so, as the attendant, who was not expert, maneuvered to bring the sill of the car flush with the tiling of the lobby.

The delay was sufficiently prolonged for Lafitte to realize, all in a flash, he had not been wrong. Through the intervening grille of the shaft door he saw two more men who pressed close up to that door, who stared in at him, whose looks and poses were watchful, eager, prepared. Besides, Lafitte knew plainclothes men when he saw them.

Up above and here below, he was cut off. There still was a chance for him, a poor one but the only one. If he could shoot the elevator aloft quickly enough, check it at the third floor or the fourth, say, and hop out, he might make a successful dart for the fire escape at the rear of the hotel—provided the fire escape was not guarded. In the space of time that the elevator boy was jockeying the car, he thought of this, and having thought it, acted on it.

Swinging his fist from behind with all his might, he hit that

hapless fellow on the point of the jaw and deposited him, stunned and temporarily helpless, on his knees in a corner of the cage. Lafitte grabbed the lever, shoved it over hard, and up the shaft shot the car. Before he could get control of it, being unfamiliar with such mechanisms and in a panic besides, it was at the top of the house. But then he mastered it and made it reverse its course, and returning downward he pulled the lever, bringing it toward him.

That was the proper notion, that gentler manipulation, for now the car, more obedient, was crawling abreast of the third-floor level. It crept earthward, inch by inch, and without bringing it to a dead stop he jerked up the latch of the collapsible safety gate, telescoped the metal outer door back into its folded-up self, and stooping low because the gap was diminishing he lunged forward.

Now that elevator boy was a quick-witted, a high-tempered Irish boy. He might be half dazed but his instincts of belligerency were not asleep. He told afterward how, automatically and indignantly functioning, he grabbed at the departing assailant and caught him by one leg and for a fleeting moment, before the other kicked free, retarded him.

But by all that was good and holy he swore he did not touch the lever. Being down on all-fours at the rear side of the slowly sinking car, how could he touch it? Why, just at that precise fraction of a second, the elevator should pick up full speed was a mystery to him—to everybody else, for that matter.

But pick up full speed it did. And the Irish boy cowered down and screamed an echo to a still louder scream than his, and hid his eyes from the sight of Lafitte, with his head outside and his body inside the elevator, being decapitated as completely and almost as neatly as though a great weighted knife had sheared him off at the neck.

Take the Spaniard and the Italian: Steadily they traveled westward for nearly all that night which followed their evacuation from the Limited. It put desirable distance between them and the spot where they had dumped the special agent down. Also it kept them warm. This was summertime but on the desert even summer nights are chilly and sometimes downright cold. Before dawn, they came on a freight

train waiting in a siding. Its locomotive faced west. That suited their book.

They climbed nimbly aboard a flat and snuggled themselves down behind a barrier of farm implements. Here, breakfastless but otherwise comfortable, they rode until nearly midday. Then a brakeman found them. Harshly he ordered them to get out of there.

Immediately though, looking at them where they squatted half hidden, his tone softened, and he told them he'd changed his mind about it and they could stay aboard as long as they pleased. On top of this, he hurried forward as though he might have important news for the engine crew or somebody.

They chose to get off. They had noted the quick start as of recognition which the brakeman had given. They figured —and figured rightly—that by now the chase for them was on and that their descriptions had been telegraphed back and forth along the line. The train was traveling at least twenty miles an hour, but as soon as the brakeman was out of sight, they jumped for it, tumbling like shot rabbits down the slope of the right of way and bringing up jarred and shaken in the dry ditch at the bottom.

Barring bruises and scratches, Green had taken no hurt, but Gaza landed with a badly sprained ankle. With Green to give him a helping arm, he hobbled away from the railroad.

To get away from that railroad was their prime aim now. Choosing a course at random, they went north over the undulating waste lands and through the shimmering heat, toward a range of mottled high buttes rising on beyond.

It took them until deep into the afternoon to cover a matter roughly of five miles. By now, Gaza's lower left leg was elephantine in its proportions and every forced step he took meant a fresh stab of agony. He knew he could not go much farther. Green knew it too, and in his brain began shaping tentative plans. The law of self-preservation was one of the few laws for which he had respect. They panted from heat and from thirst and from weariness.

At the end of those five miles, having toiled laboriously up over a fold in the land, they saw close at hand and almost directly below them, a 'dobe hut, and not quite so near at hand, a big flock of sheep. At the door of the cabin, a man in overalls was stripping the hide from a swollen dead cow.

Before they could dodge back below the sky line, he saw them and stood up expectantly. There was nothing for them to do except to go toward him. At their slow approach, an expression of curiosity crept over his brown face and stayed there. He looked like a Mexican or possibly a half-breed Indian.

When Gaza, stumbling nearer, hailed him in English, he merely shook his head dumbly. Then Gaza tried him in Spanish and to that he replied volubly. For minutes they palavered back and forth; then the stranger served them with deep drafts from a water bottle swinging in the doorway with a damp sack over it. The water was lukewarm and bitterish-tasting but it was grateful to their parched throats. Then he withdrew inside the little house and Gaza, for Green's benefit, translated into Italian what talk had passed.

"He says he is quite alone here, which is the better for us," explained the Spaniard, speaking swiftly. "He says that a week ago he came up from Old Mexico, seeking work. A gringo—a white man—gave him work. The white man is a sheepman. His home ranch is miles away. In a sheep wagon he brought this Mexican here and left him here in charge of that flock yonder, with provisions for a month.

"It will be three weeks then before the white man, his employer, comes again. Except for that white man he knows nobody hereabouts. Until we came just now, he had seen no one at all. So he is glad to see us."

"And accounting for ourselves you told him what?" asked Green.

"I told him we were traveling across country in a car and that going down a steepness last night the car overturned and was wrecked and I crippled myself. I told him that, traveling light because of my leg, we started out to find some town, some house, and that, hoping to make a short cut, we left the road, but that since morning and until we blundered upon this camp, we had been quite lost in this ugly country. He believes me. He is simple, that one, an ignorant, credulous peon.

"But kind-hearted, that also is plain. For proof of it observe this." He pointed to the bloated, half-flayed carcass. "He says three days ago he found this beast—a stray from somewhere, he knows not where. So far as he knows there are no cattle droves in these parts—only sheep.

"She was sick, she staggered, she was dizzy and turned in circles as if blind, and froth ran from her mouth. There is a weed which does that to animals when they eat it, he says. So, hoping to make her well again, he put a scrap of rope on her horns and led her here. But last night she died. So to-day he has been peeling her. Now he goes to make ready some food for us. He is hospitable, also, that one."

"And when we have eaten, then what? We can't linger here."

"Wait, please, Señor. To my mind already an idea comes." His tone was authoritative, confident. "First we fill our empty stomachs to give us strength, and then we smoke a cigaret, and while we smoke, I think. And then—we see."

On frijoles and rancid bacon and thin corn cakes and bad coffee, which the herder brought them on tin platters and in tin cups, they did fill their empty stomachs. Then they smoked together, all three of them, smoking cigarets rolled in corn-husk wrappers.

The Mexican was hunkered on his heels, making smoke rings in the still, hot air when Gaza, getting on his feet with difficulty, limped toward the doorway, gesturing to show that he craved another swig from the water bottle. When he was behind the other two, almost touching them, he drew the special agent's pistol and fired once and their host tumbled forward on his face and spraddled his limbs and quivered a bit and was still, with a bullet hole in the back of his head.

This killing gave the Italian, seasoned killer as he was, a profound shock. It seemed so unnecessary, unless——? He started up, his features twitching, and backed away, fearing the next bullet would be for him.

"Remain tranquil, Señor," said the Spaniard, almost gayly. "For you, my comrade, there is no danger. There is for you hope of deliverance, you who professed last night to have hope in your soul.

"Now me, I have charity in my soul—charity for you, charity for myself, charity also for this one lying here. Behold, he is now out of his troubles. He was a dolt, a clod of the earth, a creature of no refinement. He lived a hermit's life, lonely, miserable. Now he has been dispatched to a better and a brighter world. That was but kindness." With his foot he touched the sprawled corpse.

"But in dispatching him I had thought also for you—for both of us. I elucidate: First we bury him under the dirt floor of this house, taking care to leave no telltale traces of our work. Then you make a pack for your back of the food that is here. You take also the water bottle, filled. Furthermore, you take with you this pistol.

"Then, stepping lightly on rocky ground or on hard ground so that you make no tracks, you go swiftly hence and hide yourself in those mountains until—who can tell?—until those who will come presently here have ceased to search for you. With me along, lamed as I am, me to hamper you, there would be no chance for either of us. But you, going alone—you armed, provisioned, quick of foot—you have a hope."

"But—but you? What then becomes of you? You—you sacrifice yourself?" In his bewilderment the Italian stammered.

"Me, I stay here to greet the pursuers. It is quite simple. In peaceful solitude I await their coming. It cannot be long until they come. That man of the freight train will be guiding them back to pick up our trail. By to-night at latest I expect them."

At sight of the Italian's mystified face he broke now into a laugh.

"Still you are puzzled, eh? You think that I am magnanimous, that I am generous? Well, all that I am. But you think me also a fool and there you err. I save you perhaps but likewise perhaps I save myself. Observe, Señor."

He stooped and lifted the dead face of his victim. "See now what I myself saw the moment I beheld this herder of ours: This man is much my shape, my height, my coloring. He spoke a corrupt Spanish such as I can speak. Put upon me the clothes which he wears, and remove from my lip this mustache which I wear, and I would pass for him even before the very eyes of that white man who hired him.

"Well, very soon I shall be wearing his clothes, my own being hidden in the same grave with him. Within ten minutes I shall be removing this mustache. He being newly shaven, as you see for yourself, it must be that in this hovel we will find a razor. I shall pass for him. I shall be this mongrel dullwit."

A light broke on the Italian. He ran and kissed the Spaniard, on both cheeks and on the mouth.

"Ah, my brother!" he cried out delightedly. "Forgive me that for a moment I thought you hard-hearted for having in seeming wantonness killed the man who fed us. I see you are brilliant—a great thinker, a great genius. But, my beloved"—and here doubt once more assailed him—"what explanation do you make when they do come?"

"That is the best of all," said Gaza. "Before you leave me you take a cord and you bind me most securely—my hands crossed behind my back—so; my feet fastened together—so. It will not be for very long that I remain so. I can endure it. Coming then, they find me thus. That I am bound makes more convincing the tale I shall tell them.

"And this is the tale that I shall tell: To them I shall say that as I sat under this shelter skinning my dead cow, there appeared suddenly two men who fell upon me without warning; that in the struggle they hurt my poor leg most grievously, then, having choked me into quietude, they tied my limbs, despoiled me of my provender and hurriedly departed, leaving me helpless. I shall describe these two brutal men—oh, most minutely I shall describe them. And my description will be accurate, for you I shall be describing as you stand now; myself I shall describe as I now am.

"The man from the train will say: 'Yes, yes, that is true; those are surely the two I saw.' He will believe me at once; that will help. Then they will inquire to know in which direction fled this pair of scoundrels and I will tell them they went that way yonder to the south across the desert, and they will set off in that direction, seeking two who flee together, when all the while you will be gone north into those mountains which will shelter you. And that, Señor, will be a rich part of the whole joke.

"Perhaps, though, they question me further. Then I say: 'Take me before this gringo who within a week hired me to watch his sheep. Confront me with him. He will identify me, he will confirm my story.' And if they do that and he does that—as most surely he will—why, then they must turn me loose and that, Señor, will be the very crown and peak of the joke."

In the excess of his admiration and his gratitude, the Italian just naturally had to kiss him again.

They worked fast and they worked scientifically, carefully,

overlooking nothing, providing against every contingency. But at the last minute, when the Italian was ready to resume his flight and the Spaniard, smoothly shaven and effectually disguised in the soiled shirt and messy overalls of the dead man, had turned around and submitted his wrists to be pinioned, it was discovered that there was no rope available with which to bind his legs. The one short scrap of rope about the spot had been used for tying his hands.

The Spaniard said this was just as well. Any binding that was drawn snugly enough to fetter his feet securely would certainly increase the pain in the inflamed and grossly swollen ankle joint.

However, it was apparent that he must be securely anchored, lest suspicion arise in the minds of his rescuers when they arrived. Here the Italian made a contribution to the plot. He was proud of his inspiration.

With the Mexican's butcher knife he cut long narrow strips from the fresh slick cowhide. Then the Spaniard sat down on the earth with his back against one of the slim tree trunks supporting the arbor, and the Italian took numerous turns about his waist and his arms and the upper part of his body, and tightly knotted the various ends of the skin ribbons behind the post. Unaided, no human being could escape out of that mesh. To the pressure of the prisoner's trunk, the moist, pliant lashings would give slightly but it was certain they neither would work loose nor snap apart.

So he settled himself in his bonds, and the Italian, having shouldered his pack, once more fervently kissed his benefactor in token of gratitude, wished him success and made off with many farewells.

So far as this empty country was concerned, the Italian was a greenhorn, a tenderfoot. Nevertheless, he made excellent progress. He marched northward until dark, lay that night under a murdered man's smelly blanket behind a many-colored butte and next morning struck deeper into the broken lands. He entered what he hoped might be a gap through the mountains, treading cautiously along a narrow natural trail halfway up a dauntingly steep cliff-side.

He was well into it when his foot dislodged a scrap of shaly rock which in sliding over the verge set other rocks to cascad-

ing down the slope. From above, yet larger boulders began toppling over into the scoured-out passageway thus provided, and during the next five minutes the walled-in declivity was alive and roaring with tumbling huge stones, with dislodged earth running fluid like a stream, with uprooted stunty piñons, with choking acrid dust clouds.

The Italian ran for dear life; he managed to get out of the avalanche's path. When at length he reached a safe place and looked back, he saw behind him how the landslide had choked the gorge almost to its brim. No human being—no, not even a goat, could from his side scale that jagged and overhanging parapet. Between him and pursuit was a perfect barrier.

Well content, he went on. But presently he made a discovery, a distressing discovery which took the good cheer right out of him. This was no gateway into which he had entered. It was a dead-end leading nowhere—what Westerners call a box canyon. On three sides of him, right, left and on ahead, rose tremendously high walls, sheer and unclimbable. They threatened him; they seemed to be closing in on him to pinch him flat. And, of course, back of him retreat was cut off. There he was, bottled up like a fly in a corked jug, like a frog at the bottom of a well.

Frantically he explored as best he could the confines of this vast prison cell of his. He stumbled upon a spring, and its waters, while tainted lightly with alkali, were drinkable. So he had water and he had food, some food. By paring his daily portions down almost to starvation point, he might make these rations last for months. But then, what? And in the meantime, what? Why, until hunger destroyed him, he was faced with that doom which he so dreaded—the doom of solitary confinement.

He thought it all out and then he knelt down and took out his pistol and he killed himself.

In one of his calculations that smart malefactor, the Spaniard, had been wrong. By his system of deductions, the searchers should reach the 'dobe hut where he was tethered within four hours or, at most, five. But it was nearer thirty hours before they appeared.

The trouble had been that the brakeman wasn't quite sure of the particular stretch where he had seen the fugitives

nestled beneath a reaping machine on that flat car. Besides, it took time to spread the word; to summon county officials; to organize an armed searching party. When at length the posse did strike the five-mile trail leading from the railroad tracks to the camp of the late sheep herder, considerably more than a day had elapsed.

The track was fairly plain—two sets of heavy footprints bearing north and only lacking where rocky outcrops broke through the surface of the desert. Having found it, they followed it fast, and when they mounted the fold in the earth above the cabin, they saw the figure of a man seated in front of it, bound snugly to one of the supports of the arbor.

Hurrying toward him they saw that he was dead—that his face was blackened and horribly distorted; that his glazed eyes goggled at them and his tongue protruded; that his stiffened legs were drawn up in sharp angles of agony.

They looked closer and they saw the manner of his death and were very sorry for him. He had been bound with strands of fresh rawhide, and all through that day he had been sitting there exposed to the baking heat of the day.

Now heat, operating on damp new rawhide, has an immediate effect. Heat causes certain substances to expand but green rawhide it causes to contract very fast to an ironlike stiffness and rigidity.

So in this case the sun glare had drawn tighter and tighter the lashings about this poor devil's body, squeezing him in at the stomach and the breast and the shoulders, pressing his arms tighter and tighter and yet tighter against his sides. That for him would have been a highly unpleasant procedure but it would not have killed him.

Something else had done that. One loop of the rawhide had been twisted about his neck and made fast at the back of the post. At first it might have been no more than a loosely fitting circlet but hour by hour it had shrunk into a choking collar, a diminishing noose, a terrible deadly yoke. Veritably it had garroted him by inches.

THE ELEPHANT FORGETS

BY COURTNEY RYLEY COOPER

FROM *Saturday Evening Post*

COURTNEY RYLEY COOPER

knows circus life from the elephants to the tight-rope walkers. His short stories are widely popular, as are his books, especially "Under the Big Top."

A FEW days after Goliath had added his bulk to the line of twenty-nine elephants in the Grand Amalgamated herd, the menagerie superintendent paused for a moment of acrid conversation with the boss bull man. "Wouldn't you know it?" he asked. "Old Mom don't like him."

"Yeah?" The bull boss was busy repairing a block and tackle.

"Trouble with her," went on the superintendent, with a gossipy look toward the head of the asphalt-colored group of animals, "she's getting grouchy, like an old maid. That's the trouble with her."

"Yeah?" asked the head elephant man again. "Now I'll tell you something. Trouble with her is that she probably figured out this big bozo was nothin' but a no-good bum the minute she set her eyes on him." He slammed down the block and tackle. "What's more, she's dead right. I wouldn't hitch him to a dirt wagon."

"Have more trouble this morning?" asked the superintendent, preparing to move on.

"What do you think I'm overhaulin' this block 'n' tackle for?" snapped the elephant boss, and the superintendent suddenly heard someone call him from the big-top connection. The bull boss went back to his work of realigning a pulley, misplaced by terrific strain. At last he looked up toward the fretful old elephant at the head of the line.

"Wonder what the old gal's got on her mind," he mused.

Naturally Old Mom, queen of the Grand Amalgamated herd, could not answer. She didn't know herself. She only realized that ever since the hulking Goliath had appeared, a strange sense of uneasiness had occupied her mind. It was a fretful feeling, the kind of sensation one has as he fishes for his railroad ticket and can't find it. It was more than that, for every time that Old Mom glanced toward the towering beast, a slow resentment boiled within her, and an innate desire to walk over to him and hand him a wallop that would

knock him into the last of next week. She didn't know the reason for that either, and it bothered her.

It didn't bother Goliath. With a newly painted sign above him announcing him to be the biggest elephant in the entire world, giving his height, his girth, age and weight, Goliath stood in a special position in line, fenced in by red-velvet ropes and corner stakes of brass with big knobs on them. Inside this was an overabundance of hay and carrots, temporarily disregarded for other dainties being offered by a curious throng of workingmen, staff members and performers. However, the joy was only transitory. Soon the crowd had straggled away to the command of the bull boss and his assistants for elbowroom. There was to be a resumption of the vain sessions which had been in progress ever since Goliath had arrived in his special freight car from the Salt Lake Zoo.

The big elephant's chains were loosed. Protesting, he was led forth, the rest of the curious line stretching forth their trunks at him as he passed. To none of them did he give regard until he had reached the head of the line, where the wrinkled old herd leader, her eyes half closed and her ears flat, wriggled the end of her trunk along the ground; then, raising it toward the passing giant, emitted a strange snort, half blast and half trumpeting. It was plainly an insult; the massive Goliath whirled, breaking loose from suddenly frantic bull men. He arched his trunk until it curled against his bulging head. His eyes protruded and his mouth opened. A bellow came from his throat like the exhaust of a giant motor, while Old Mom, her head shaking dubiously, suddenly shrank back to her place in line. Goliath outweighed her a full thousand pounds. The reach of his trunk was a foot longer than hers, the heft of his shoulders greater; youth was in his staunch legs, power in his gigantic muscles. Old Mom knew trouble when she met it. Hurriedly she curled her trunk about a wisp of hay and waved it ecstatically before dropping it into her mouth. Her air was almost kittenish; like a fussy old lady asking a young ruffian if he couldn't take a joke. Then, while Goliath still puffed and bellowed, the bullhooks were fastened anew and men yanked upon them.

"Come along here, big rubber boy!" shouted the boss bull man, and the march to the empty big top began.

Events there followed the same course which they had pursued on other mornings. They put the training harness upon Goliath and rigged the block and tackle to a center pole. They spread a heavy pad of canvas before the giant bull and fastened other pads upon his legs—the instruments by which trainers protect their pachydermic charges against pain during training. Then destroying his equilibrium with the block and tackle, they yanked at other ropes attached to his ankles, the first step in teaching an elephant to kneel. They were still at it two hours later, when the proximity of matinée time brought cessation.

"That bull knows what we want," growled the boss.

"Then why don't he do it?" an assistant asked.

"How do I know?" The head elephant man was sweating from exertion. "But you take it from me, that bull's been trained. He's hook-wise, for one thing. He don't act like he thinks we're goin' to kill him every time we truss him up. A kindergarten bull would be scared to death. This big slob? He just slumps!"

"Might as well be sixteen thousand pounds of putty."

"There you are," answered the bull boss. "That baby's no fool. He's worn out trainers before. He's done it with me—for to-day. Take him back."

Back went Goliath, once more to pass Old Mom, and this time to take the initiative. Old Mom's previous attitude of surrender had brought certain evidences of the bully to the surface; Goliath extended his trunk as he passed her and blasted a note of distinct contempt. Old Mom only moved her feet in hasty padding and rolled her eyes. Then the hooks dug deep and Goliath went on to his place in the stake line, there to trumpet furiously as a lead-covered bulk bounced away from the giant's hay and, stubby trunk extended, ran squealing to a timorous halt behind Rajah, the next largest of the Grand Amalgamated herd, before finally taking up a circuitous route to the protection of Old Mom's belly. Ten-year-old Billy Sunday was the privileged baby of the herd. He was tractable and cunning; the circus allowed him to wander about free because he was an attraction to youngsters. More than that, he was the sun, moon and all the stars to Old Mom. The larger elephants, for the most part, looked on him with a certain amount of affection. Others, like Phœbe, who

was foster mother to ten punks whom she thought much more wonderful than Billy, carefully concealed their feelings, especially when the youthful pet came around further to enlarge his girth at their hay pile. Otherwise Old Mom might whack the daylights out of them. But Goliath was an elephant who didn't know the rules of the herd and who didn't seem to care.

The excitement down the line sent Old Mom into a new fever of uneasiness. She trumpeted, quieting the fuss, but her command lacked a proper note of authority. Abstraction was the cause; with her first glimpse of Goliath when he had stepped out of his freight car, something had crossed her brain and snagged there—a vague, filmy presentiment that refused to emerge from its mental pigeonhole. The fables concerning an elephant's infallible memory remain fables. An elephant has exactly the same memory as a human being. Sometimes it works unerringly. More often it must be jogged by association or an incident. Old Mom felt that she knew this big bull. Where she had known him, and how—that was a different matter. But of one thing she was certain: she didn't like him.

She became more fixed in that dislike as, with soft chirruping, she turned and began a tender survey of Billy's anatomy with the delicate finger of her trunk. The baby's bulbous body showed no traces of injury; in fact, he had already forgotten his fright, and, piggish eyes distended, had begun an assault upon a bushel of overripe apples which the boss bull man had brought that morning to the queen of the herd. Billy's appetite was one thing that never faltered.

That was good. A less joyous state might have forced Old Mom into a belief that she must protect her favored young, and that might mean disaster. Old Mom knew, from long experience, when to lick a member of her herd and when to be diplomatic. This distinctly was one of the latter times; she was seventy-odd, the giant of her dislike was not more than fifty, and twenty years counts as much in an elephant fight as it does in the prize ring. Besides, there was that uncertainty of a lack of memory; the strange feeling that she knew something about this particular elephant, if she could only remember which particular elephant he happened to be. So she did the logical thing. She merely ignored him, placing him

in the same category with Alice and Major and Colonel and others, who were just elephants.

But the circus didn't ignore him. Especially the Old Man, who had given the Salt Lake Zoo a thirty-two-thousand-dollar check for him, and who, after days of telegraphing, finally came on the show, bringing a wrinkled little man who walked with a cane.

"Know Stumpy Brooks, don't you?" he asked of the bull boss. Then: "What's the news on Goliath?"

"Goliath?" asked the bull boss. "Oh, Goliath. Well, he ain't worked yet."

"Why not?" The Old Man puffed excitedly at a new cigar. "He ought to work by this time, oughtn't he?"

"How do I know what he ought to do?" asked the bull boss desperately. "He just won't work, that's all."

"But what's he do?"

"He don't do nothin'. He just stands there till we yank him off his feet, and then he doubles up and lays down like a sack of meal. So we put the mechanic under him again and hoist him up. Then he just stands. So we jerk his feet out from under him and he lays down again. What're you going to do with a boob like that?"

"Don't squeal?" asked Stumpy Brooks.

"No, he don't do nothin'."

"Same's he did on the Tri-United, after Effie died."

"You was on the Tri-United with him, wasn't you?" asked the bull boss.

"That's why I brought him along," said the Old Man. "Now, you two get together."

A strange, crinkly feeling went along the back of the bull boss. "I'll make him work if anybody can," he snapped.

The Old Man puffed furiously. "Then why don't you do it?" he countered. "If you couldn't work him, what did you let me order all that paper for? Twenty-four-sheet stands, sixteen and eight sheets, window cards, lithographs, cloth banners, street-car placards—fifty-eight thousand bucks' worth of junk to tell the dear public that we're bringing 'em the biggest performing elephant in the whole world. And now he won't perform!"

"I'm doing all I can," said the boss bull man.

"That ain't a lot," the Old Man growled over a shoulder

as he went to hunt up the general manager. "Now you and Stumpy get together."

There was a wait then, until the Old Man had gone under the side wall. Then the bull boss waved a weak hand toward the elephant line.

"All right," he said, "take him."

"I don't want him," answered Stumpy.

"That's what you came here for, wasn't it?"

Stumpy pushed back his Panama hat and made wild motions of negation.

"I never done no such thing. I got too good a job at winter quarters. I just come here to help out with what I know about him. That ain't much. He just won't train. Don't I know? He'll stampede but he won't train."

Whiteness made its appearance about the bull boss's lips.

"But I got a hundred dollars bet with the dressing-tent gang that he will," came weakly. "They ragged me into it. Why shouldn't I have bet 'em? I never see the bull before I couldn't handle. Except this one. Funny, ain't it? I keep thinking that bull's been worked somewhere."

"Sure he's been worked. I worked him."

"Then what——"

"Now, don't ask me no foolish questions. All I can tell you is what happened. For one thing, he ain't always been big like this. When we got him on the Tri-United in '99, he wasn't no bigger 'n ordinary bulls."

"Don't remember what show he came off of?"

"Can't prove it by me. The Tri-United was swappin' bulls all that spring."

"Everybody was," agreed the boss bull man. "That's the year we got Old Mom off the Whitten Brothers."

"We got some there too. I don't know which ones, though. Anyway, this big slob showed up, and he was all right. As fine a bull as you ever seen. Not more'n twenty and just beginning to get his growth. Worked like a streak of lightnin'—funny, how he worked," Stumpy continued—"like he was scared to death of something. Still, he wasn't afraid of a bull hook, so he couldn't have been mishandled. But that's the way he worked."

"Movin' all the time, huh?" asked the bull boss, with a yank at his cap.

"Right now," answered Stumpy. "Now don't ask me for no reason for it. He was growin' all the time; maybe he got lazy as he got big. Finally it was pretty tough to work him. Then a bull named Effie come on the show and he sort of fell for her. You know how bulls are. That pepped him up for a while and he worked like his old self. Then Effie got bumped off down in the railroad yards one day; her and a freight train got on the same track. After that, maybe Goliath lost interest. Finally we sold him to the zoo."

"Peddled him because he wouldn't work, eh?"

"Ever see a Kansas cyclone?" asked Stumpy. "Well, that's why we peddled him. He let us bat him around just so long. Then one day he rose up and went through the circus like wind through a straw hat. So we brung him back and worked on him some more. He stood it about ten days. Then he smashed down three sections of seats, knocked over the band stand, wrecked the hippopotamus den and bumped off an innocent bystander who got in the way. So it was kill him or sell him. We sold."

The boss bull man scratched his tousled head.

"All I can do is keep tryin'," he mused.

"All you'll get is a smacked-up circus," Stumpy informed him cheerfully. "I've tried to tell the Old Man, but he won't listen; he's got that printin' ordered. So it ain't my funeral."

"No," answered the bull boss mournfully, "it's mine."

There were certain evidences, as the days passed, which indicated that Stumpy Brooks might be a prophet. Dumb, puttylike in training, Goliath was showing signs of being exactly the opposite in the stake line. Familiarity with the beasts about him was bringing a strengthening degree of contempt. He stole the hay of Colonel and of Mazie, his side partners. He blustered and swept clouds of dust from the ground with great gusts from his trunk whenever the sociable Billy Sunday even hinted at an approach. He broke from his place in line on the march to and from the cars, taking up as much of the street as he chose, and he did this without a single bellow of remonstrance from Old Mom.

Not that Old Mom failed to watch him constantly. There were times, too, when a wicked gleam came into her vigilant eyes and a nervous twitching ran along her trunk; usually a signal that some unfortunate pachyderm was about to be

whammed into a comatose condition. But such things happened to elephants of a conquerable size; not a giant like Goliath. So the indignities of the bull line increased and the bellow of Goliath grew louder. One day when Colonel dug down under his hay to take out an orange which he had hidden there early that morning, Goliath calmly stuck forth his trunk and robbed him of it.

Matinée was over; the menagerie men were at the cook house and the tent was deserted. There was no human to dispense justice, no one to answer an outraged elephant's squeal of protest. Colonel loved oranges; enough, in fact, to give a moment's resistance to the piracy. His ears swung wide, then flattened. He snorted belligerently. Instantly Goliath dropped the orange and swung his trunk with a blow that knocked Colonel out of line, jerking his stake from the ground and sending him rolling into the center of the tent. There he scrambled and rose, bawling. An instant more and he whirled as if to go crashing forth in flight. It was then that Old Mom yanked out her stake and went forth to settle the matter.

A panic was in its beginning; Phœbe was bellowing commands to her excited punks; Babe and Eva were thrashing about; Frieda was trumpeting in an attempt to bring calm to the ten elephants over whom she served as a subqueen. Forward went Old Mom, trunk tight beneath her chin, but not toward Goliath. Instead, she struck Colonel on the run, butting him to his knees. She lashed him and thrashed her trunk about his squinted eyes. She rose and drummed about his shoulders with swift-working hoofs.

Then she stood back and roared for him to take his place at the picket line. The elephant obeyed grudgingly; Old Mom feinted at him and he moved more swiftly. Then, as the ancient herd queen started back to her place, she suddenly halted before the towering Goliath and began to strut.

Why she did it, she did not know. She only realized that a transitory sense of power was in her heart, a feeling of invulnerability. For several minutes she walked before him, a swagger in her shoulders, her trunk low and snorting, her eyes burning with malevolence. This time it was Goliath who pretended not to see, Goliath who whisked up some hay and feigned its huge enjoyment, meanwhile keeping his gaze on the top of the tent. As suddenly as the mood had come to

Old Mom, it passed. Rather dazed, she went back to her position at the head of the herd; there was no explanation for the menagerie men when they came back from dinner to find two elephants with their stakes pulled. Old Mom seemed a bit more fretful than of late, that was all.

In fact, the turmoil of her brain had increased greatly. Not that she recognized it wholly; an elephant cannot psychoanalyze. In that fierce moment of conflict, memory had all but returned to her, giving her power and supremacy. Then it had floated away again. But it had left a strange aftermath.

"Either that big lobster's sulking, or he's decided to be a good boy," said the bull boss a few days later. "Noticed how decent he's been actin' lately? No breakin' out of line, no bullying of the rest of the herd, no sapping at Billy Sunday?"

"Know how far I trust that bull?" asked Stumpy. "Just as far as I can throw him. . . . Hey, men, rig up that block an' tackle!"

So they brought Goliath forth; long runs and late arrivals had prevented an attempt at schooling since the day before Old Mom's outbreak. With his departure from the elephant line a queer change came over the brute.

It had manifested itself with the first loosening of his chains —an eager fretfulness which increased as he padded through the menagerie to the big-top connection and then to the training area. Goliath presented the appearance of one glad to be away; he raised his trunk and trumpeted with a note of freedom, and the bull men set about their work with more enthusiasm than usual. For once, Goliath was giving evidences of understanding; perhaps this time he would not slump down like a mass of soft dough when they affixed the mechanic.

"Shake a leg there!" commanded the bull boss of his assistants. "Let's get goin' before this baby changes his mind. All right, lower that belt. . . . That's it—lower! . . . Now you men slip it under his belly. . . . Nix—drop it—drop it and get the hooks. . . . Goliath!"

The tremendous beast had suddenly whirled and, his trunk weaving low, stood blasting defiance. The bull boss seized a hook and raced forward. The animal threw him off, tossing him ten feet away with scarcely an exertion of his trunk. Stumpy Brooks came limping forward, white-faced—he had seen Goliath act this way before. Then a dozen men scrambled

to catch the defiant animal off guard. He whirled before them, fending them off with a flailing sweep of his trunk. At last, with a bellow that shook the tent, he crashed forward, knocking men from his path, surged blindly across the newly laid ring curbs, crashed through a half-erected section of seats, and out under the open side wall, a plank wagon careening from his path as he collided against it.

The big top was dynamic with energy now; half of the bull crew following the rampant beast, the other half, led by the bull boss, running for the main elephant line in the menagerie. Chains clanked. Elephants chirruped with reflected excitement. Old Mom trumpeted commands in relay as they were given her by the bull boss, swinging her forth to herd her charges before her. Then a man came running under the side wall.

"Rush them bulls! We've got a chance to take him! He smacked into the cook house and knocked it down! He's over there, thrashing around under the canvas!"

"Quick! Before he breaks for the open!" shouted the bull boss, and gave Old Mom the hook for action.

Out under the side wall went seventeen tremendous hulks; Phœbe, her punks and Billy Sunday had been left behind. Over the soft, rocking soil of the circus lot they raced to where the wreckage of the cook house billowed and tossed to the movements of a gigantic figure beneath, moving aimlessly as he strove to free himself of the tangle of canvas. Swiftly the bull boss sent the rescue elephants into a circle about the wrecked tent. Then, cupping his hands, he shouted above the bellowing and thunder of hoofs:

"All right, men! Close 'em in!"

"Mule up!" shouted a dozen voices, and seventeen elephants swung to a tightening circle.

"Canvasmen! Razorbacks! Loosen them seams! Yank loose that tent!"

A half hundred men leaped to their task, jerking at the ropes which held together the sections of canvas, and working gingerly until they were almost within touching distance of the distraught elephant beneath. Then to a new command, they pulled furiously; the seams parted. The truant giant stood released, eyes red and raging, trunk upraised.

"Close in!" came in a chorus from the bull men; again

seventeen elephants lessened their circle. Goliath bellowed, Goliath trumpeted, as if for new defiance; and as suddenly he was silent. Abject, quiescent in surrender, he stood there, panting and waiting for the attendants to come forward and take him under their guardianship. But in the meanwhile the bull boss flopped suddenly at the end of the hook which he had placed in Old Mom's trunk, and yelled for help.

"You old idiot!" he shouted at her when two assistants had come to his assistance. "What's got into your cockeyed brain now? Ain't we had trouble enough, without you flying off the handle?"

Old Mom, still trembling, answered with a querulous chirrup. She did not know why the desire had all but overwhelmed her, to race forward, head down, and attempt to give this hulking giant the beating of his life. Like a mist clearing before the sun, the veil of forgetfulness had thinned for an instant, giving her again that sense of power and dominance which she had felt the day when she had paraded before him, and then it had left her. Now she only trembled and chirruped apologetically, and felt foolish. The bull boss gave her a kick on the shins and an affectionate pat on the trunk simultaneously.

"Have some sense, old gal," he said indulgently. "You ain't no spring chicken." With that, he shouted for formation, and Goliath obediently took his place in line, to be led back to the menagerie. There he allowed himself to be chained behind his red-velvet ropes, apparently docile. Only his rolling eyes hinted that venom might flow beneath the calm.

Two days passed after that, in which the boss bull man and his companion in trouble, Stumpy Brooks, held many conferences in their canvas lean-to just outside the menagerie tent and decided upon nothing. That was bad, for the Old Man, called away on the afternoon of his arrival, was coming back again. This time, with the memory of that fifty-eight thousand dollars' worth of paper on his mind, he might not be content with words.

"Still, if we try to work him, he'll bust again!" argued Stumpy. "That's his habit."

"I've been thinkin' about that Effie bull," cut in the boss elephant man. "Wonder if he'd work if he'd fall for some lady in our line."

"I don't know. Effie was quite a bull. For that matter, she treated him like mud. Always taking a sap at him."

"That's out," said the bull boss. "He's the guy that does the sapping now."

"Yeh," agreed Stumpy. "That's out."

The bull boss jerked mournfully at his cap.

"So 'm I," he added. "Out a hundred bucks to that dressing-tent gang unless I work that bull."

"Better start diggin' for your grouch bag," said Stumpy. "'Cause we ain't going to work him. He'll bust out again, and the next time it won't be no picnic."

Thus they presaged the future, while in the menagerie a giant elephant stood behind his velvet ropes and sulked. His eyes were narrow and vicious, and he rolled them often toward the head of the line. But he made no further evidence of rebellion. There was reason. Memory may have failed Old Mom, but it had acted in wholly the opposite manner for the object of her hate. On that day when the fretful old herd leader had paraded before him, supreme in her momentary triumph, recollection had seethed in Goliath's brain, calling up hateful memories of long-gone days and bringing a certain sense of caution. Cunning had come with it; he had waved his hay and looked at the top of the tent and pretended not to see her. He had been obedient since, except when the bull men had led him away. And now he was obedient again, on the surface. But beneath the exterior he boiled and fumed, and waited.

His watchful eyes rarely left Old Mom—the caution of a beast incessantly vigilant; and when she looked in his direction, he assumed more placidity than ever. But one afternoon Goliath suddenly shifted his interest; fifty feet away, Billy Sunday grunted along on his usual foraging expedition. The trainer had hurried Billy through his act that afternoon, and the extra exertion had created an appetite of tremendous proportions.

Here and there the baby went, snooping a few wisps at intervals, digging down after peanuts which the bigger elephants had dropped during the excitement of many offerings when the circus crowds had flooded through, wandering under the stomachs of the placid brutes in line, squeezing between their legs. Goliath watched him silently. As he watched, Billy

Sunday became something more than a mere frolicsome baby elephant. He emerged into an epitomization of hate—old hate which traveled years and years into the past, back to the Whitten Brothers Circus and a herd leader named Old Mom. Closer came Billy Sunday, sniping a peanut, a bit of orange peel, at last halting to stare with gluttonous eyes upon a joint of sugar cane which lay directly before the red-velvet ropes.

He squealed and scampered away, as if to see what would happen. Goliath apparently took no notice of him. Then the side wall rose, to reveal the bull boss, waving an arm to the one attendant on duty.

"Loosen up Old Mom and bring her out here!" he commanded. "Got a wheel off the stake-and-chain wagon!"

The attendant obeyed. The bull line gawked and craned its necks and stretched its trunks with curiosity. Then the swaying rear of Old Mom disappeared under the side wall and the picket line grew complacent again. Billy Sunday squealed anew and moved a step nearer the sugar cane. Goliath gave no evidence that he even saw the baby. Closer came Old Mom's pet, and still closer, his stubby trunk extended in exploration of forbidden ground. Still there was no bellow of remonstrance, no padding of great hoofs; only those piggy eyes growing steadily more narrow, those great ears coming flatter to the head. Billy saw only the sugar cane. He forgot caution. A hungry squeal came from his throat and he eased forward, mouth working voraciously, and bent to scoop up the dainty.

But he shrieked as he did so—shrieked and twisted like a bird in the grasp of a boa constrictor. The tremendous trunk of Goliath had curled above him and descended, catching him full about his funny little pot-belly, and raising him, a screaming thing of terror, in high circles. A bellow of triumph sounded from the giant's throat; then, while the rest of the elephant line swayed and pitched and trumpeted, Goliath snapped his stake from the ground as though it were nothing, and plunged through the velvet ropes into the open, the better to achieve his vengeance.

He swung the stricken baby madly. He lowered him and scraped him, squawking, along the ground, his hide rasping horribly. He turned him, he mauled him, while great grunts of joyous anger came from the tremendous beast's throat;

then he sent that serpent-like trunk into suffocating tightness, until Billy Sunday's ribs distended and his agonized screams drowned even the cries of the other elephants and the snarls of suddenly frenzied beasts in the cat cages. Again and again Goliath scraped him on the ground; then suddenly he raised him and whirled him downward, one foot lifted to crush out the life of the semiconscious infant.

There he halted, his eyes glaring, his great hoof raised impotently. The side wall had fallen, jerked from its fastenings by the impact of a hurtling body. A thunderous bellow echoed which stilled the bull line. Herself gigantic in anger, Old Mom now moved forward, the whites of her eyes fringed with angry red, her great trunk curled for attack, caution forgotten, comparative size unheeded; a demon was progressing, with no thought save that of the protection of her beloved pet.

The pursuing bull boss caught at her with his hook; she tossed him off. An assistant came at her and she sent him tumbling with what seemed no more than a wriggle. She bellowed again, while before her a giant suddenly seemed to shrivel. Goliath had lowered his trunk. His legs had lost their stiffness. Squealing anew, Billy Sunday came to his feet and scampered away, unheeded. Goliath saw only the approaching Nemesis, and Goliath quailed. In that instant Old Mom trumpeted anew and with a different note. That moment of cowardice had been enough. She remembered now!

No longer was she old. No longer was she afraid of greater strength, a longer trunk, bigger shoulders. She was back on the Whitten Brothers Circus, dealing with a bulk of elephant flesh in which the psychological color of yellow predominated, a faker who must be driven to his act, a cowardly bully except when she stormed upon him. Old Mom knew him now, and the giant bulk before her shrank to the being which once she had beaten and flailed and stormed into tractability. She lowered her head. Her trunk gusted with her heavy breathing. Then, a swaying, unconquerable catapult of rage, she swept forward to the attack.

Vainly Goliath whirled and sought to avoid her; the full force of her impact caught him in the midriff, knocking the breath from him in a blast that rose even above the scraping of their armorlike hides. Goliath staggered. Again he sought

to whirl, but the heavy head of Old Mom was beneath him and her neck muscles straining to throw him off balance. The giant reeled in the air, he scrambled mightily; a screech like the grinding of steel came from his open throat; he fell, he rose; then, bellowing his fear, he ran!

But he could not escape. A dozen men strove to halt her; Old Mom did not know they were there. She saw only one thing—this giant coward, this being who had violated the rules of her little monarchy and who had assaulted her beloved, pampered Billy Sunday. Ancient legs streaked in pursuit, and vengeance was faster than fear. She circled him in the center of the big top and halted him. Again she lowered her head and plunged, again she caught him low and in a spot of pain. The giant Goliath bellowed piteously; Old Mom answered by a series of flailing blows about his mouth and head that drove him from her in another attempt at flight. But he turned just at the wrong moment; a five-ton battering ram had come upon him again. This time he rolled helplessly for an instant, taking the blows of hoofs and trunk before he could struggle to his feet again. His mouth was wide, now, in frantic fright. The curl was gone from his trunk, his rear legs dragged. Again and again the cries echoed from his deep throat—cries of anguish, of fear—cries for mercy. Old Mom still continued to drive upon him, while bull men worked feverishly at the picket line, to surround the tent with the remainder of the herd, in case of new flight.

There was no flight. There was only a new attack, new screams, and still another attack to follow that, while Goliath dodged frantically or bent to the blows which a rapidly weakening herd leader swung at him. Then suddenly, as fatigue brought a momentary halt to Old Mom's assaults, the gaint swerved, cried forth piteously and ran into the ring.

He knelt and bellowed. He rose and, trunk sagging, began to move his feet in the semblance of a dance—a dance such as only a trained elephant can know. A shout came from behind Old Mom, where the bull boss and Stumpy were moving forward, bull hooks extended. In the ring, the biggest elephant in the world halted, dazed, trembling.

A trumpet call came from Old Mom, as, weaving from fatigue, she strove for the strength for one more assault. Goliath answered with frantic begging. He knelt again and rose, and

knelt once more, squealing anew. Then the bull men rushed forward to surround the weaving old herd leader, while past them streaked another form—that of the head elephant man, shouting commands as he leaped into the ring.

"Knees, Goliath!" he shouted, and the elephant obeyed. "So you need a tough gal like Old Mom to make you work, eh?" He yelled as he danced about the harassed bull. "Halt! Head up! Now, knees, you yellow bum! Knees!"

On went the routine, the regular actions that are as instinctive to a trained elephant as life itself, while panting, vigilant, Old Mom stood in glowering survey. Outside the tent a command sounded and the main herd moved back into its place at the picket line. Someone ran for a washtub and a quart of iodine for the squealing Billy Sunday. Stumpy Brooks, his work with the main herd ended, limped back to the big top, where Old Mom snorted a blustering second to the bull boss's every command.

"Anything I can help you with?" shouted Stumpy Brooks. The bull boss looked up from his work of making Goliath, the biggest elephant in the world, roll over.

"Yeah," he said laconically. "Go tell that dressing-tent gang that I'm ready for my hundred dollars."

THE SILVER KNIGHT

BY MIRIAM A. DE FORD

FROM *American Short Story*

MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD

is a poet whose translations of Lucretius, Juvenal, and Catullus are as well and favorably known as her own poems. She is also the wife of Maynard Shipley.

I WISH I could recreate for you the strange section of Virginia in which I passed my childhood and youth. It was not tidewater country—there were no great plantations, no gracious, white-pillared homes past spreading lawns and gardens. The Brett family and ours were the aristocrats of the neighborhood. Though we were connected with some of the best families in the state, we lived in ordinary, large frame houses, such as you may still see all over Maryland and northern Virginia. Old Mr. Brett, before he died, served as postmaster at Riverpoint. Most of the farms were of from two to four hundred acres, and the farmers were—well, "yeomen" is the only word that comes to my mind. The newest holding dated back to the Revolution; the owners of the impoverished old places were of English and Scotch descent, plain men who had owned a few slaves, probably, before the war, but who had always superintended their own farms, as their fathers had done before them.

The Rappahannock River was three miles away from us, Riverpoint (as its name would indicate) being the port. Riverpoint was scarcely a town; it had a postoffice and a general store, and farther down the river were a few oystermen's shacks. Our supplies came from Baltimore—what few things we did not produce ourselves. You might still find a spinning-wheel in most houses, and a loom in more than one. Soap was made at home as a matter of course, and sometimes candles, though most of the farmers lighted their homes with coal-oil lamps. Such things as these they bought at the store in Riverpoint, where very little money was ever handled. The common medium of exchange was eggs; an egg was worth a cent in any season, and I suppose the storekeeper made his own adjustments.

The boys used to swim in the Rappahannock, which was almost a mile wide at that point, about forty miles from its mouth at Chesapeake Bay. All of us children, we Thorntons and the Bretts among them, used to scour the fields and woods for persimmons and chestnuts, steal hazelnuts and walnuts

from the farmers in the fall, and apples and cherries from our own carefully tended trees in the spring, and wander down the river-bank to forbidden territory, where the oyster-men were. The nearest railroad was at Richmond, nearly fifty miles away.

I was hardly more than a baby when the Civil War ended, and the South settled down to its long, heartbreaking struggle with poverty and Reconstruction. Every grown man I knew as a child had been in the Confederate Army—some of them had left the neighborhood for the first time in their lives when they enlisted. Hardly anyone ever moved in, and no one ever moved out; so we scarcely ever saw a stranger except the crews of the supply boats and an occasional summer visitor.

The first memory I have is of Roger Brett—or rather, of his mother, as with those slender white hands of hers trembling ever so little, she talked to my mother about her only son. Lucy Brett was not one of us; she had been Lucy Carter of Richmond. The war had disarranged families as well as everything else; more than one of our neighbors had come back with a bride brought from some other part of Virginia, or even farther. It was a good thing for the racial strain, of course; but what a hard time those young wives must have had! Mrs. Brett was eighty-four when she died; but to the very last she was regarded with the brittle courtesy extended by a provincial to an unassimilable foreigner. Perhaps, though, that was more on account of Roger.

That Roger was different—that some never-mentioned mystery hung over him, some deep unlikeness to us all—was apparent from even a glance at his delicate, Shelley-like face, his startled gray eyes, his whole appearance of a fairy child. He was about three years older than I, so that when I first remember him well he must have been seven. With the matter-of-factness of childhood, I associated Roger's strangeness with his mother's foreignness, and accepted them together. Even the meaningless cry with which the older children used to taunt him: "Couldn't keep a nurse! Scare-nigger Brett!" conveyed so little to me that I joined whole-heartedly in the fun, piping uncomprehended insults at him and a moment later joining him amicably in some juvenile pursuit.

As I grew older we became great friends—that is to say,

he allowed me to join him in the long solitary walks he was accustomed to take, and he told me fairy stories or we made up songs together, he supplying the words and I the very reminiscent music. On Sundays, when the farmers came to the little Presbyterian Church in two-wheeled ox-carts, and the semi-gentry in phaëtons and gigs, the Bretts always kept a place in their phaëton for me, and I deserted my own parents and brother and sister to walk three-quarters of a mile to the Brett home and climb in beside Roger and his little sister.

How or why this custom should have arisen I can't imagine. But it was so much taken for granted by my family, in time, that my father got into the habit of calling by for the doctor and taking him to church in the place that should have been mine.

It was on one of these drives, when I was perhaps twelve years old, that I first caught a glimpse of the mystery which surrounded the Bretts, and especially Roger.

As our childish gibes at Roger implied, the colored people were afraid to serve the Bretts. Old Aunt Kate, whom Mrs. Brett had brought with her from Richmond, still presided over her kitchen; but all the other help refused to stay in the house, and only outrageously high wages for the time and place persuaded them to assist at all. Half an hour before sunset, every colored man and woman employed in the Bretts' home or on their farm was safe in his or her own cabin; and no bribe could have brought them near the house again until the sun was high the next morning. I learned long afterwards that, when Roger was born, Mrs. Brett sent all the way to her old home for a woman to care for him; and the woman stayed just two days. So Mr. Brett always drove his own carriage, for it was hard enough to get Negroes to do the most necessary work where he or his family was concerned.

It was an intoxicating morning in early May. We drove slowly down the sandy road, bordered with pines and cedars; and I can remember—or perhaps it is from so many other occasions—the soft scrunch of the wheels, the slight rustle of the leaves in the warm air. Wild-blackberry vines were in flower and wild-roses were just beginning to show their pink tips. Ahead stretched the sky, painfully, intensely blue, with

newly washed and curled little clouds drifting here and there across it.

I was dressed in stiffly starched white muslin—I must have been; it was the Sunday uniform of all my tribe, with black velvet ribbons to hold back our hair and little black leather strapped slippers over our white stockings. In my warm hand would be clutched a moist penny for the collection—how miserably poor we still were!

I can see Mr. Brett turning around, his florid face full of concern, his dark side-whiskers, his round blue eyes. All Roger's beauty came from his lady mother.

"Are you all right, Roger? All right, Laura? And Cecily?" This last to me.

"Yes, sir," we answered in prim chorus.

Then some devil prompted me to ask a question I had never considered a second before. Something in the sight of Roger, his pale face fixed on the feathery clouds, his eyes alight, must have suggested it.

"Mrs. Brett," I said, "after church, may Roger come home with us and spend the night?"

Lucy Brett's jet earrings trembled visibly under the purple pansies of her bonnet. Her husband turned around again, his face suddenly pale.

"Did your mother tell you to ask that?" he demanded.

I felt like crying at the fierceness of his voice; indeed I think I did whimper a little, as I shook my head. Then Mrs. Brett turned; her face too was white and her mouth was set. Laura had flushed scarlet; and Roger's gaze was fixed on the sky as if it would never return to earth.

"Cecily, child," said his mother gravely, "I know you didn't mean any harm. But Roger never goes anywhere at night—he's—he's not strong."

Then it suddenly occurred to me that when my brother organized a party of boys to spear catfish by lantern-light, Roger had not been with them; that he never came to our little parties unless they were given in the daytime; that in fact he was never seen anywhere after dark. Laura wasn't, either; but then she was too young to go to parties alone.

Here the scene fades from my memory, as all consciousness of it did for a year or so afterwards. The next insight I re-

member into the Brett mystery was one day the following summer, when I was amusing myself, in a very unladylike manner, by teasing our old cook as she sat on the kitchen door-sill shelling peas.

Aunt Mandy was very patient, but there were limits to her patience.

"Looka heah, honey," she exclaimed, at about the twentieth prod from a blade of grass on the back of her bare brown neck, "ef yo' doan quit aggervatin' me Ah'm gwine lock yo' up all night oveh to Bretts' place."

I sat upright in the grass at that.

"Aunt Mandy," I demanded, "I wish you'd tell me—what are you folks afraid of the Bretts for?"

"Caze dey's hants dah, dat's why," she replied succinctly.

"What kind of haunts?"

"Maybe dey's one kin' an' maybe dey's anuddah. Ah ain't neveh been dah. But fum what Ah mos'ly heahs, dey's lights."

"Lights? What lights?"

Aunt Mandy picked her two hundred pounds up off the door-sill, and went into the kitchen with her peas. Not a word more could I cajole or threaten from her.

A strange double feeling possessed me from that hour. On the one hand was my affection for Roger Brett, the only person I knew who liked to read as I did, who was interested in poetry and music and dreams. On the other hand, my tomboy self—the self that Roger never evoked—was wild with curiosity. It mastered me finally; and one night I slipped from my bed, dressed hurriedly and ran barefoot over the orchard and the fields to the Brett house.

It was dark and silent; if there were any lights there, they were not in evidence. The house was built much as ours was, long and low, with a hallway running straight through it from front to back, and a porch all around it. On either side stood a tall cedar tree—Mr. Brett called his home "The Cedars," but to all of us it was simply "Bretts' place."

I had not climbed trees all my life for nothing. Like a shameless little monkey I found my way up the right-hand cedar. The vines around the house shivered and creaked in the night breeze; an owl called softly near by; but there was no other sound. Nor was there a light. Through the open windows on that side of the house I could see, dimly, common-

place sleeping figures huddled in beds, such as I had left at home. I don't know exactly what I expected to find; I think my distorted imagination had built up an image of flickering lights like a will-o'-the-wisp.

Disappointed but unashamed, I climbed down the tree, and clambered up the other cedar, to the left of the house. My eyes, grown accustomed to the dark, peered intently into the nearest window. Their search was rewarded.

At first I had the impression of silver—a silver plate or a mirror lying on a bed. But gradually as I gazed I saw that what lay before me was a face and two arms, washed as it were with dim, phosphorescent light. And as my frightened eyes fixed themselves on that face, I saw that it was Roger's.

My heart beating so that I could scarcely breathe, I slipped down the tree and ran home on shaking legs. It was an hour before I could sleep—amazement, compassion, and a strange unreasoning fear swept over me in torrents.

A derrick could not have drawn that secret from me. For a while I avoided Roger self-consciously, then sought him the more lest he suspect me. After a time, most of my horror left me, and I could be naturally friendly with him again. But no more than the Negroes would I have gone again to the Brett home at night.

In a little world where all the boys except my brother and Roger Brett were hard-working farmers' sons, doing their last reading in the little country school taught by one of their own sisters, utterly without interest in anything but stories of the war and the current price of corn—where the only other unmarried male was old Dr. Griggs, a bachelor of nearly seventy—it was inevitable as we grew into adolescence, that in spite of my knowledge of the curse upon him, Roger Brett and I should fall in love.

Such ignorant, fantastic, half-comprehending love it is that comes to an untaught young girl amid such surroundings! The haze of five years had veiled my dread; instead, this weird affliction, whatever it was, made, to me, only another reason why I must protect and guard Roger as his own family had always done. I made no allowance for the recoil of the body, which is so beyond the instruction of the mind. Roger became a sort of fairy knight—as indeed he was, poor boy,

in his pure and ardent spirit and his eager, seeking mind.

The day came when he was for the first time to compete in a tournament.

Did you ever hear of a Virginia tournament? I wonder if in some remote fastness of that unchanging state, young men and girls still gather from twenty miles around every summer to spear rings on wooden lances? Perhaps not; another war has jerked us all free from old traditions. Let me try to describe it as it was when I was a young girl in the early eighties.

In the first place—or in the last—it was followed by an enormous picnic supper where cold fried chicken held the place of honor; and the supper was followed by an entertainment in the school-house, with recitations, and music on the cabinet organ, and dancing. But from noon until all challengers had competed, the tournament itself held sway.

Any young man who had a horse—and a girl—might compete. On a wide, flat field a row of poles was erected, with side-pieces, something like old-fashioned gallows. From each side-piece hung a hook, from which depended an iron ring. Past this line of poles, some dozen in all, the combatants swept on horseback, each armed with a nine-foot-long wooden lance, which he carried in approved chivalric fashion—horizontally, above his shoulder. As he rushed by at top speed, he must try to spear on his lance as many as possible of the iron rings. Then, after all who desired had taken part, the timekeeper estimated the swiftness of their riding. He who had gone the fastest, and taken the greatest number of rings as well, was acclaimed victor. The girl he had brought with him was crowned with flowers, and was made queen of the feast that followed. Couples used to come before daylight, so as not to tire their horses, and wait eagerly for the timekeeper's pistol-shot that opened the tournament.

Roger was a splendid horseman. He had a black stallion, Manfred, that no one else could handle; and the summer he was twenty and I was seventeen he entered the tournament. I was his chosen maiden, of course; and with what a thrill of pride I took my place in the grandstand to watch my knight perform! Tournaments had been dull affairs before, compared with this one!

He was the fifth in line. I could see Manfred curvetting and

prancing, and how firmly Roger held him to his place! I suppose the first four did well enough—I didn't notice. But my knight dashed by like a whirlwind, and when he had passed only one ring remained unspeared. It was the one opposite my place in the front row of the grandstand, which may have had something to do with it! As he returned the rings to the timekeeper, with a sweeping bow, all the spectators burst into cheers and applause. He bowed again, tied Manfred to a fence-post, about twenty feet from where my own bay mare was tethered, and came over to stand by me and watch the rest.

As I have said, everyone had to wait until the last contestant had ridden, to be sure who was the victor. There seemed little doubt that Roger had beaten them all; but at the last minute someone might, for example, spear all the rings and do it as fast as he had speared all but one.

But none of the fourteen horsemen who followed Roger came near his record; the master of ceremonies proclaimed him victor, and I stood up, trembling a little (I can see myself yet, an awkward young girl in violet dimity), to receive the crown of flowers on my bare head. For an afternoon of my life I was royalty—Queen Cecily, no less. Arm in arm with Roger, I strolled about among my congratulating subjects.

And then—the afternoon wore on, and white cloths were being spread on the grass, and baskets of fragrant chicken and flaky cake were being opened. Gradually the sun sank in the west; gold and mauve clouds streaked the flushed sky.

Roger's family had not come—they were seldom seen at tournaments—and he was to eat with us. On the way to where my people sat, he stopped abruptly.

"Cecily," he said in a hurried tone, "I—I can't wait—I have to go. You can come home with your folks."

"Wait," I answered. "I'll tell mother and go along with you."

"No—please don't. Stay and have your supper, and——"

Before I realized his intention, he had dropped my arm, run to the tether, jumped on Manfred's back, and was gone.

I called to my surprised family, mounted my bay, and followed. Roger turned at the sound of hoofs behind him and waved me away. Something despairing in that gesture went to

my heart. I spurred the mare and in a few minutes I was up with him.

"Roger," I said, my throat choking on the words, "I know what is the matter."

He looked up at that, terror and questioning in his eyes. It was not yet twilight; his face was only ghastly pale.

"Never mind how I know," I went on recklessly. "I *know*. And I don't care."

We had both halted now. The road was very still; only, far-off, sounded the swishing and creaking of a retreating ox-cart.

"You *must* care, Cecily." His voice came slow and painful through his set jaws. "Because—because I love you."

Without a word I turned my face to him, and held out both my hands. His arms went around me tight.

He released me with a long sigh.

"We'll talk about this to-morrow, blessed girl," he breathed. "Now—no, even so, I have to leave you. We're nearly home—you'll be safe."

He kissed my hand and was off with speed. The dusk grew deeper; as he reached the turn of the road he waved, and half-sight, half-fancy showed me a silver gleam. A thrill of terror shot through me.

The next afternoon I went to see Doctor Griggs.

"What, precisely, is wrong with Roger Brett?" I asked him.

The old doctor looked deep into my eyes.

"Have you the right to ask, my dear?" he said gently.

"Yes, I have. We love each other. We are going to be married."

He shook his head.

"I hardly know how to tell you," he began. "It is a rare, very rare phenomenon. I have read a few reports of other cases in medical journals. He has been like that from birth—he will never get over it. There is no satisfactory theory to account for it. Simply, just as certain plants and lower animals are luminescent, once in a great while a human being is like that. The entire body glows in the dark like phosphorus. It may be some obscure maladjustment of the perspiratory apparatus. We do not know."

He shook his head again.

"I should rather have talked this over with your father and mother than with you, my dear," he said.

"We're not going to tell them just yet," I objected—did I say that Roger and I had had a long talk this morning? "We're neither of us of age, but we want to get married as soon as Roger is, next spring."

"Do you realize, Cecily," said the doctor, choosing his phrases carefully—like many elderly bachelors, he was very cautious as to the words he used in speaking to young people —"that when you and Roger are married, you will have to be —intimate? Isn't there danger you'll be frightened if, for example, you should wake up in the night and see him shining in that strange way by your side?"

A momentary vision of that night five years before welled up in my mind, but I repressed it instantly.

"I know it wouldn't make the least bit of difference," I replied. "Nothing in the world could separate Roger and me."

"Well," Doctor Griggs smiled a bit sadly, "you've six months to wait yet, and many things can happen in six months. We'll see."

And courteously, he rose and opened his office-door for me to pass.

It was a stormy love, Roger's and mine. A dozen times he implored me to repudiate him, tried desperately to harden his heart to repudiate me. He would go away—to Richmond, to the north. He threatened to tell my mother and ask her to send me away to school to save me from him. We struggled until we were exhausted, only to end in each other's arms. For a while he carried a pistol in his pocket, and in the middle of one of our long arguments he would bring it out and gaze at it strangely and lovingly. With tears I begged him to put it away, until finally he either did so or no longer let me know he carried it.

But what a lover he was! All his wild imaginings, his dreams, his longings, he poured at my commonplace feet. I was no longer the ordinary little girl he had played with all his life—I was a princess, a goddess, a fairy queen. I can still feel his kisses—like humming-bird's wings on my throat; his drowning, despairing grasp of my hands when, worn out by controversy, we sank into each other's embrace at last for rest and comfort from the smiting of the beloved adversary.

It was April. I was just eighteen, and in another month Roger would be twenty-one. We began to turn our thoughts, tentatively, to the winning of our parents, especially of mine, for I could not be married in Virginia without my parents' consent for three more years. But still we said nothing to them, whatever they suspected.

One evening old Doctor Griggs stopped by in his buggy—he had long ago ceased to ride to church in our phaëton.

"I've a call over in Oldstown," he said. "I'd like Miss Cecily to drive over with me."

The doctor was my father's most intimate friend; he had brought all us children into the light of day, and was especially fond of me, for I had been a sickly infant and he had saved my life more than once. Often, when he had an early evening call that he knew would not last long, he would stop by for me and we would drive over and back together.

The road to Oldstown led through a wood of pine and hickory. In the center it dipped into a slight ravine, where a little clear creek ran down to the Rappahannock. The warm spring night was dark, the moon not yet risen; but the doctor's horse knew every inch thereabouts as well as we did, and picked his way surely along the narrow road.

"Cecily," said the doctor, "have you seen Roger—at night?"

"Not yet," I answered—my stolen glimpse of him I could never mention. "He won't let me. I beg him to, but he is too sensitive."

"I see," murmured Doctor Griggs thoughtfully. "Poor children! Poor children!"

We went on in silence, the slow motion of the buggy making no sound, the horse's hoofs scarcely more. We began to descend to the ravine, where a little wooden bridge crossed the creek, which we could hear bubbling and rippling in the darkness.

Suddenly Doctor Griggs called, "Whoa, Star!" and reined up.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"This right rear wheel—don't you feel it wobbling?"

He climbed down and lighted a match.

"Yes—sure enough; it's got an eighth of an inch play. We'll never get to Oldstown that way. I'll have to go over to

Uncle Joe's cabin—that's the nearest place, I reckon—and see if he has a monkey-wrench. Want to stay in the buggy, or come along?"

"I'd rather go with you. Will Star stand here without us?"

"All night, if he has to." The doctor helped me out.

Quietly we went in single file along the cross-path by the brook. All at once Doctor Griggs gripped my arm.

"Look, Cecily," he whispered.

I looked up abruptly. Before me stood the most beautiful and the most terrible thing I have ever seen.

A boy's nude body, clad in shining silver. A startled figure clothed in gleaming light. Wide eyes that glittered like diamonds in a luminous face.

My mind, my heart, leaped out as ever to Roger. But my fear-stricken body could not contain itself. I heard it shriek—two long, frightened screams.

The glowing figure bent, turned and ran. I found myself crouching in the old doctor's protecting arms.

"I was afraid so," he was murmuring. "The nerves revolt, my child, the nerves revolt. It isn't your fault, but it can't be endured."

"What—what was he doing there?" I asked through chattering teeth.

"I arranged it, Cecily, to test you. There's no cure for him, poor boy, but I told him if he bathed at night in the creek it might help him. And I brought you here to see."

I fell to sobbing helplessly. Then suddenly my mind regained control of my traitorous body.

"Where is he?" I cried. "Roger! Where has he gone?"

"He has run to put his clothes on and go home, my dear. Don't worry."

"He hasn't." I moaned. "He'll hurt himself! I know it!"

Then the old doctor grew frightened, too, and ran about beating the underbrush and calling him. For ten minutes I rushed wildly here and there though the woods, crying, "Roger! Roger! Come back to me, Roger!"

And at last the answer came. It was a pistol-shot.

That is the last I remember. A long time before I recovered from my faint and the delirium that followed it, the shining, accursed body that had housed Roger Brett's beautiful spirit lay gleaming in the unfrightened and welcoming dark earth.

MISFORTUNE'S ISLE

BY RICHARD MATTHEWS HALLET

FROM *Saturday Evening Post*

RICHARD MATTHEWS HALLET

has served as seaman or officer on many different kinds of ships in odd corners of the world. He writes most often of the doings of old Salem traders and sailors.

CAPTAIN ARAD'S first glimpse of the Doña Delfina Crispo showed him a soul imprisoned. The rebellious eye, the rich mouth shadowed by black hair, the very pose of her slim body in the open carriage, were all eloquent of her captivity. She was the wife of Don Narciso Crispo, captain general of Zamboanga, but now resident in Manila—a little monkey of a man, yellow as a faded sunflower from jaundice, and with a limp acquired from a drunken fall into a tiger pit outside of Singapore. Ambitious and romantic, Doña Delfina had nothing to do but rise at eleven in the morning, take chocolate, hold her soul firm, and through a broken oyster shell in the oyster-shell window of her balcony watch the black soldiers, the cigar makers and ship captains filing past.

Half-breed women—those mestizas with the magnificent hair and the hint of China in their eye corners—could vary the monotony by leaning out occasionally to spit at a mark with betel-nut juice—say, for choice, the sombrero of a passing *caballero*. Doña Delfina, a woman of rank, had to content herself with French and Spanish novels, and an occasional cigar. She remained in advanced dishabille until four in the afternoon, usually. When an earthquake had moved the upper walls of the house on its beams—they stuck out four or five feet, so as to give what Arad called margin enough to veer and haul on—she had been perhaps the only woman in Manila who had not rushed into the streets beating her breast and crying, "*Misericordia! Don Jorge, misericordia!*" Her heart, no doubt, had stopped in her bosom, but she had only bowed her head and prayed to be engulfed, snatched bodily away from such a hateful destiny.

The satirical earthquake had contented itself with putting a queer kink into the cathedral roof, overthrowing the bull-ring parapets, and bringing down one of the eight arches of the iron bridge over the River Pasig. After that, everything was as before. The cathedral bells tolled at stated times, the clack of stone hammers beating out tobacco leaf was resumed in the tobacco factory, and at four o'clock, when the

sea breeze revived, carriages in an endless chain began to revolve on the Calzada—the boulevard just outside the walls on the bay side of the town.

These carriages were called the shoes of the country—in fact, no woman of rank could walk so much as a hundred paces—and Doña Delfina's shoe was drawn by two gray Manila ponies, one bestridden by a postilion in shiny black leggings, a spur on his left heel, tight shorts, a spicy jacket, and a hat as hard and black as a japanned-iron coal scuttle. Doña Delfina would usually be looking past this individual's ears at the shipping in the bay. Certainly every size and shape and intention of ship was there, a quaint intermingling of chain, hemp, grass rope, coir and bamboo cables; and among these Arad's ship, the *Water Witch* of Salem, was not the least conspicuous, with her black hull and painted ports, her rigging freshly tarred and rattled down, and the house flag flying at her peak.

"They tell me these Spanish women wear no stockings," Arad's friend, Captain Michael O'Cain, was muttering in his ear.

Arad replied somberly, "How is a man going to tell? You shouldn't lean so hard on hearsay, Michael."

Orderlies in powder-blue uniforms, cocked hats and jack boots, with heavy carbines on their shoulders and long steel swords jangling at their sides, were riding up and down madly, keeping order. The sun was sinking now, and one of these orderlies blew a blast on a trumpet. As if by a flourish of magic, the line of carriages, headed by the captain general and the archbishop of Manila, stopped; the military band of black soldiers was hushed; and by common consent, all—gentlemen, orderlies, soldiers and servants—took off their hats gracefully to repeat a silent vesper prayer. Captain Arad saw that Doña Delfina still sat erect, unmollified. She was bare-headed, her shoulders narrowed under her black mantilla, the last gleam of the sun's upper limb reflected in her eyes. The fierce warrior's head of Jamboo, the interpreter, was just beyond her, fixed in an attitude of attentive worship, but his divinity was nearer, evidently, than the flaming skies.

Now the prayer was over and the slow movement of dished wheels on the yellow road was resumed. Doña Delfina passed Captain Arad so close that she might have touched him

with that fan showing a picture of a fallen bullfighter; instead she masked her mouth with it, but her eyes smiled. Don Narciso was half asleep at her side. If that little yellow man should die, Captain Arad thought, Delfina, unlike the Fiji Island women, would not be found imploring his relatives to strangle her, so that she might follow him into the beyond.

By a queer chance, that very night Don Narciso was all but throttled in his bed by robbers, or more likely pirates, who had succeeded in swarming over the city walls. He was rescued just in time by the big halberdier stationed outside his door; but the pirates were in sufficient force to escape without loss of any of their number. In the morning the bay was peaceful, but the scandal of pirates actually attacking a town of these dimensions while it slept was being discussed on every corner. Captain Arad waited in person on Don Narciso, sat with him beard to beard—as Narciso himself said—in the *sala* of his stone house.

"I am glad," the trader began, "to see that these rascals after all have done you no great damage, Excellency."

Don Narciso, sitting in a white nightcap, felt of his throat.

"A man who is afraid to die never truly lives," he muttered, with a miserable attempt at boldness, but he could not keep a tear from trickling over the lacquered surface of that famous glass eye, blown and colored and inserted for him by the celebrated Doctor Pablo.

"True," the Yankee shipmaster agreed. "But even if these pirates are run to earth, opportunities for dying will be plentiful enough for any man placed as Your Excellency is. If you let them run wild, in the end there's nothing they won't attempt. Here you are, for example, in a modern city, protected by a wall and ditch, drawbridges, gates, sally ports, soldiers, with a watch set every night; yet the beggars break in and all but choke the life out of you personally."

"Maledictions and fatalities," Don Narciso breathed.

"Fatalities. Exactly. A broadside of my thirty-two pounders in the middle of them will furnish fatalities enough."

"But they have escaped."

"Not without leaving a clew. My kind friend Jamboo, Yang-Po's interpreter, picked up one of their muskets on the shore this morning. An English musket with the Tower stamped on the lock. By a private mark I know it for a

musket I traded myself to a pirate—Seriff Sahibe. I know his nest. It's a river mouth on the coast of Borneo. You'll know it by an island there with a queer Malay name, but the English of it is Misfortune's Isle."

"Misfortune's Isle. But that is the island—the island——"

"Of the upas tree, you are going to say. Exactly. What harm? The stories about that tree are nonsense. It will neither singe the hair nor numb the faculties of those who lie under it. The Dyaks extract a poison from it, I admit, to tip their arrows with, and they worship the tree, naturally; but these other stories are pure invention."

"But I am told that the river's mouth is stockaded," Narciso objected.

"We can get round that. Lash whaleboats to the piles at low tide, and as the tide rises the buoyancy of the boats will pluck the piles out like so many radishes."

"But our arms. The weapons of my soldiers. Half the time our guns miss fire; the percussion caps are abominable. The least moisture, a squall or a fall of dew, and we are helpless. We are forced to make our own powder, since the government of Spain forbids the importation of powder into Manila."

"That reminds me of my friend Billy Sturgis," Arad laughed. "His owner furnished him with nothing but quakers—wooden guns, Excellency, painted black—but he smuggled aboard four actual cannon, with ball and powder answerable; and with these he beat off pirates in the China Sea and saved ship and cargo. His owner made him pay freight on the cannon both ways, when he heard of it."

"You jest."

"I am as much in earnest as those eight thirty-two pounders aboard my ship. I tell you, I have guns and powder enough to blast Misfortune's Isle out of the water, upas tree and all; but—I am only a trader. Ugly stories of tyranny could easily get afloat if I effected this without official coöperation. My owners wouldn't like it. They would argue that I had gone out of my way to unlatch those guns. I should be worse off than Billy Sturgis. Now, if I can say that you, señor, commandeered my services, I am on better ground."

"Who are these pirates?"

"A league of three forces, principally. There are Malays

headed by Seriff Sahibe; there are Dyaks—head-hunters—under Gapoor; and there is that misplaced band of Chinamen—convicts—who seized the junk in which they were being transported from Hong-Kong to Singapore. Jamboo tells me they are all members of the Illustrious Brotherhood of Heaven and Earth. Our friend Yang-Po—the Capitan China—is the head of that organization, it so happens. He tells me it was founded by him to set crooked things straight. Yang-Po owes his life to me. His junk is in the bay, and he agrees to pilot us into the shadow of Misfortune's Isle. My friend O'Cain, if you consent, follows us in my ship, the *Water Witch.*"

"And do not forget, Don Narciso!" Doña Delfina cried—she had suddenly come on the scene, exquisitely girlish in flowered English muslin with a gardenia blossom in her hair. "We heard only yesterday that Spain will make any man count of Manila who will rid these waters of pirates."

"But suppose Yang-Po cannot persuade these Chinamen," Narciso faltered.

"Well, what are a few Chinamen more or less? Knock 'em down; they're only tea and rice. Set me ashore at that stockade with two loaded pistols," the trader said sternly, and with cunning grandiloquence suited to the Spaniard's needs, "have I not still an advantage? Do I not stake my one life against two others?"

"*Ah, Dios,*" Delfina murmured in a tone of worship, "*quel hombre!*"

What a man! This murmur turned the edge of all Narciso's arguments. He was in the miserably equivocal position of an arrant coward with a widespread reputation for courage and an ambition to maintain it. His restless wife had three times already, on the coast of Chile, goaded him into lucky undertakings. As he sat now, he was Knight of the Grand Cross of the Military Order of Saint Hermenegildo, and of the Military Order of San Fernando, and decorated with seven more crosses of merit for war services—once removed—in the campaigns of both hemispheres.

"But you, señor capitan—what have you to gain?" he finally demanded.

"Trade. I don't want to conceal anything. This river is full of gold and antimony ore, and the limestone cliffs of the

island, I am told, contain edible birds' nests. My friend Houqua at Canton loves bird's-nest soup. He will give me a shipload of raw silk and broken silver in exchange."

Don Narciso got up hastily and said he would consider the proposition further. Flanked by huge halberdiers and standing at the head of a broad damp flight of stone stairs in his earthquakeproof house, he shouted down to the retreating Arad the various honors imparted, the signal obligations conferred by Arad's presence, by the mere shadow of his shadow, on this house and on the family of which he, Don Narciso, was the least considerable member. Doña Delfina stood darkly ravishingly limned against a lime-washed wall. Captain Arad was stirred; he felt a wash of subtle emotion in his blood. It was as if he had glimpsed under a flying moon the wings and heels of a superb China trader, going with the strength of the monsoon, and suddenly sliding up onto a coral shoal and sticking fast, so that no press of canvas could snatch her off into the deeper water.

"*Adiosito*," her lips had fashioned noiselessly—a little farewell. A farewell with the ghost of a return in it. At Felipe Bustamente's noisy boarding house, when O'Cain roared "Does the lady wear stockings or not?" Arad said somberly, "No matter for that. She has a soul, Mike."

When he found, after the expedition had started, that Doña Delfina had stowed herself away aboard Yang-Po's venerable junk, Captain Arad wished he had not thought so much about the lady's soul. This piece of folly on her part was a threat to trade. If Don Narciso knew she was aboard, he would be quite capable of turning the ship's head for Manila. As it was, he had almost beat a retreat when they had lost sight of the *Water Witch* in a squall.

It was on the night following that Doña Delfina, barefooted, in the half-breed's costume of blue-and-white-striped pantaloons and a straw-colored piña shirt, put herself in Captain Arad's way. This was in the waist of the ship, near the big pole mast, and in the shadow of one of those enormous bell-mouthed cannon. She hungrily filched a cheroot from the pocket of his coat. She had, she whispered, got herself brought aboard as a sack of feathers. Was he surprised? But she would contrive to make herself useful, she assured him. She would

stay concealed until Don Narciso's knees showed signs of buckling under him and then Captain Arad would see how she could stiffen him. One way or another, she had been present at all his campaigns, and always with good effect.

"Is his nerve still good, after last night's squall?" she inquired.

"Not too good. He fell and bruised his hip."

"If it had not been for those feathers in which I came," Delfina said, "I should be nothing but bruises now. It was worse than the earthquake—this squall of yours. Then, when I heard the cannon fired, I thought the pirates had attacked us."

"We fired that shot to shatter a waterspout."

"And you succeeded?"

"Yes. At least we got the contents of the spout, but in the form of heavy rain, instead of solid water. But the plague of it is, the rain got through the decks into the powder tubs. Our powder is useless—all except that in the firecrackers. But there's no going back. We haven't water enough left. And everybody got so excited over the waterspout that nobody thought of catching water when it fell—or nobody but me, and I prefer river water."

"You would."

"Keep in this bag of feathers one more night, and I will make you a grandee of Spain," Arad muttered. "*Condesa.*"

"Ah, *condesa.* That is good."

"But now I must get up where I can watch Yang-Po's piloting."

"*Buenas noches,*" Delfina whispered, and blew smoke deliberately into his ear. "How well this title would become you, señor—*el conde.* The great count with his black hair, and this mouth which it is certain you have inherited from your mother. It is so very sweet. Ah, *adiosito.*"

The foot of the bamboo ladder he ascended had pasted on it a red label in the Chinese, reading, "May the going up be peaceful," but with Delfina's smoke—her fire—hot in his ear, he couldn't at once recompose himself.

Yang-Po, the Capitan China, had been smoking opium, and now, to keep himself awake, had knotted his pigtail to the rigging above his head. He swayed like a hanged man with each motion of the junk, but each time they swam past one

of these black headlands, the helmsman sent Jamboo, the interpreter, to touch the Capitan's shoulder. Whereupon the Capitan would look at his chart and order a cock sacrificed to the Queen of Heaven. The chart, unrolled at his feet, was on peach-colored rice paper, and showed the one proper course—a straight track—with serpents and dragons writhing out of the deep on every hand. Arad, glancing over Yang-Po's shoulder, went a little cold to see that on this chart Siberia was jammed up close against Africa, with disastrous effect on the two or three surrounding oceans. Still, it was likely that Yang-Po knew his ship's footing in these waters.

But Don Narciso appeared to have his doubts.

"You are sure this man knows where he is going?"

"He cannot fail," Arad said. "I know him of old. I met him first when he was a student at Canton, a literary graduate of the third degree. That, of course, is a guaranty that he has learning enough to fill five carts. Later he was one of the keepers of the temple of the Silver Moon off Lin Tin, and he used to come out and beg rice of us when we were bound down the China Sea."

"Beg? Beg, you say?"

"This rascal was born begging. Whenever we smoked the rats out of the ship he was at hand to catch them when we threw them overboard. A forehanded man, Excellency. Later he was foolish enough to sell us, out of the Number One Temple at Honan, the sacred hog that was being kept to die of its own fat. We bought it for opium, and that came to the emperor's ears. Our man wasn't judged fit for strangulation after that. They crammed the wooden collar over his ears instead; that thing was four feet across any way you measured it. Yang-Po couldn't lie down, he couldn't feed himself, and the penalty is strangulation for feeding anybody in the collar, as you know. I found him in a ditch, took him aboard the *Witch*, got the ship's carpenter to saw the collar off, and gave him rum and salt horse. You see whether he is obligated to me."

"It was after that that he joined the Brotherhood of Heaven and Earth?"

"Yes. He and this fellow Jamboo joined forces, got a fast sampan, and preyed on the Chinese market boats and petty traders coming into Batavia—those fellows who do a smug-

gling business with the Dutch monopolists. Our friends got some pretty rich hauls. Molucca spices, coffee and pepper from Sumatra, gold dust, camphor, slaves and rattan from Borneo, tin from Banca, tortoise shell and dye woods from Timor. You can imagine they weren't long in getting to be pretty respectable citizens, Excellency. Jamboo was busy learning all those languages; and, in fact, I believe the fellow knows the very language of the birds; he will tell you what the trees are whispering in these plaguy rivers."

"You say they are pirates themselves?" Don Narciso said, aghast.

"Not any more." Arad laughed. "Not since they got hold of this junk. No, they are traders, like myself. This very voyage, for example, the junk is full of—sacks of feathers," he dropped out with a grim twist of his mouth and a look over his shoulder at the crooked pole mast of ironwood with the bark only half scraped off. "You will find, Excellency," he went on, quoting Byron, a favorite of his, "that this Capitan China is as mild a man as ever cut a throat."

Don Narciso brought out, with a quaver, that they ought not to close with these pirates before sighting the *Water Witch*, lost sight of in last night's squall.

"Our powder is useless, remember," the captain general of Zamboanga said.

"That may be a providence. These gun barrels are cracked, and wound with nothing but bolt silk. The touch holes are as big as the muzzles. Two men were injured destroying that spout last night. Better, in any case, trust to stabbing knives."

The fierce Jamboo, in his quilted fighting clothes, came direct from the helmsman to say that Misfortune's Isle was now in sight. Yang-Po untied his pigtail, picked up from the chart his supper of salt, dried vegetables and rice in a coconut shell, and lifted the canopy of red cloth over the compass. The little whirligig of a man there, carved out of sapan wood and fixed to the huge needle, kept on pointing his finger north. The limestone cliffs of Misfortune's Isle were close enough for them to see the broken coral belt at its foot, gleaming in wicked white patches against a black background of mangrove jungle on shore.

"Do we attack to-night?" Jamboo inquired, grounding his spear on the deck. His bronze head with its cluster of godlike

curls moved closer. Arad, remembering the look of worship he had cast at Delfina on the Calzada, thought it would be just as well if Jamboo, as well as Don Narciso, remained in ignorance of her presence on board. Jamboo was a waif, he did not know his own father or so much as the place and hour of his birth; but to an imaginative man, this may have advantages. These slumbrous watches, when he had had nothing to do but shake awake that stuffed figure of the hanging Yang-Po, it had been easy for Jamboo to imagine himself the son of a king, or perhaps a pirate by descent, as he was one already by taste. What if he were the son of Seriff Sahibe himself, and so in his own person the inheritor of these resplendent gardens of the sun and master of fierce lives? Yet, in fact, he was only an interpreter.

"Attack? There is no hurry," the Capitan China yawned. "The coiling Peach Tree of the Royal Lady of the West was three thousand years before it had a blossom, and another three thousand before it bore fruit. Who knows whether it will be necessary to attack, venerable elder brother?"

"But if we do not attack the tiger in his den, how shall we have his cubs?" Jamboo insisted.

"I have been dancing with women in the palace of the moon. I cannot answer questions," the Capitan China said. "Sacrifice a cock," he ordered, "to the Queen of Heaven."

In the storm just passed, the Queen of Heaven, sitting in her apartment aft, crosslegged in a ribbed and gilded shell, had toppled, and would have fallen if some of the sailors had not, with their profane hands, held her in her place.

"She is weak!" Jamboo had cried.

"She is angry, perhaps," the Capitan China had suggested. On either hypothesis, it would do no harm to shore her up.

The other omens were not too auspicious. The waterspout was nothing in itself, but the bursting gun had made the cannoneers timid about serving the other guns. Moreover, Don Narciso's black soldiers had been wretchedly seasick the whole time, and some had filed the sights off their guns because of a tendency to catch in the clothing in rough weather. Again there were signs that the typhoon was not yet done with them—as, the sinking of pale phosphorescent moons through the water at night, a spotty haze following a red sunset, the haze alternating with clear patches in which the

summits of the hills showed black, and finally an irregular swell across the oily face of the waters. If that Bully of the North meant to resume his antics, it would be well to have an anchorage, the Capitan China said.

The upshot was, they put the junk fairly into the shadow of Misfortune's Isle. When the limestone cliffs seemed ready to fall on the decks, Yang-Po made a motion of his hand, and there followed the splash of the junk's huge, wooden, single-fluked anchor, weighted with stones. This was echoed by a single ominous note from a gong hidden at the heart of a banyan tree on the right bank of the river. Yang-Po answered with three peals on a gong of his own, and all was quiet.

Morning showed the two yellow tablelands of Misfortune's Isle not a biscuit's toss away. In the cleft or notch between them was set a pinnacle rock shaped like a ninepin, and reeling as if for a fall. At the foot of Ninepin Rock stood the upas tree, a mighty tan-colored trunk rising sixty feet without a branch, and crowned with a thick tuft of glossy dark green foliage. Even by morning light, the great poison tree, with its clustering legends, had something eerie, ominous, about it. It stood solitary on its blasted island. Not another tree, not so much as a shrub or spear of grass, was visible there, from the sinister circular halls high on the table-lands, where the Dyaks hung and smoke-dried heads, down to the beach of black volcanic sand at the foot of the upas tree.

Even Arad, getting into the lowered whaleboat with Jamboo and the Capitan China, was glad to turn his eyes away from that tree and toward the river's mouth, where morning was breaking in a hot golden haze back of the stockade closing the channel to anything larger than a proa. The lookout banyan tree on the right bank was full of bamboo ladders, and red monkeys hung chattering from the rungs of these. The tree was deserted, except for the blue flash of the day-flying moth and the flit of leaf-green pigeons with blood-red eyes and feet. The whaleboat passed so close that Arad, standing in the stern sheets, could see the gleam of scarlet figs with honey drops at their tips; and in a few more strokes, they were in the shadow of Seriff Sahibe's house.

The proa called the *Singh Rajah*, its brass swivels shining in the sun, was moored abreast of this house and was crowded with men. But nobody opposed Yang-Po's going on into Seriff

Sahibe's house. This house, perched thirty feet over the water on slender legs, they entered by a ladder of notched logs leading to a hole in the floor. An alligator basking on a stone shelf half in and half out of water slid into the mud like something rolled on casters.

Seriff Sahibe himself was in an antique tunic of chain mail and a helmet decorated with bird-of-paradise feathers, but his legs were bare. He was sick, and lay on a bamboo platform raised a foot or more off the floor, since before now Dyak slaves and others had been known to circumvent the guardian alligator and thrust the tips of poisoned spears through the bamboo flooring, with its flimsy snaking of rattan, and into the bodies of unsuspecting sleepers.

Gapoor, the Dyak chief, was also here. His huge brass earrings he had turned up and toggled against his skull by a tiger tooth thrust through the upper part of the ear itself. This would prevent a sword from shearing the ear from his head, and was a warlike sign, which Jamboo and the Capitan China recognized by merely squatting on the floor instead of sitting cross-legged. Both had previously eased their sarongs up over the handles of their stabbing knives.

Gapoor's Sulu wife, in yellow clothes, and fair as an Italian, with her forehead shaved to match the narrow double arch of hair-line brows, offered betel-nut juice out of a silver mortar. All but Yang-Po drank, and nothing broke the decorum of Jamboo's harangue except now and then the alligator's rubbing his scales against the bark of the house posts, or once suddenly snapping to his jaws, which might have been wide open for ten or fifteen minutes through sheer laziness or inattention.

More insidious was the occasional creak in the rafters, a subtle swaying of the whole house on its attenuated legs; due, Arad found, to the weaving and looping, in the dark overhead, of Seriff Sahibe's pet anaconda, whose body was as thick through as a strong man's upper leg. There was apparently no end to him. He did nothing worse, actually, than dislodge a couple of centipedes from the thatch; but once or twice Arad knew, by a sickening odor and an arrested expression on the handsome face of the Sulu wife, that the seeking head of this pet was within a foot of his own. If the conversation, through any blundering of Jamboo's or through Gapoor's misinter-

preting the most innocent words, took a wrong turn, who could answer for the disposition of those giant black folds?

But so far Jamboo was doing very well. He explained to Seriff Sahibe that the white shipmaster had come to trade and would pluck the riches of the limestone caverns of Misfortune's Isle to gratify his Chinese friend Houqua's palate for bird's-nest soup.

Seriff Sahibe played with his toes and asked why the shipmaster had not come in his own ship? That was pertinent, and Jamboo replied glibly that the shipmaster's ship was refitting at Manila, and that the Capitan China was his friend and knew these waters. Seriff Sahibe fluttered his lids. Perhaps he thought it more likely that the Capitan China had been retained to detect frauds. The Capitan had a gift that way, as was known. If the Dutch at Amboyna hung their clove bags over water to increase their weight by absorption, Yang-Po would know it by squeezing the cloves in his fist. Again, if the Hong merchants at Canton offered, as tea, chopped elm and willow leaves dyed with Prussian blue, or if the traders at Bombay adulterated opium with pounded poppy leaves and camels' dung, Yang-Po's counsel was invaluable He knew, too—this literary graduate, with his five cartloads of knowledge—how to test the purity of camphor; and he could tell gold from brass filings by simply picking up the stuff on his wet finger ends.

Whatever his thoughts, Seriff Sahibe listened politely. The Capitan China seemed innocence itself. He accompanied Jamboo's remarks with lifts of the brow, shrugs, head slants and polite hissings, but the pirate knew that members of the Brotherhood of Heaven and Earth had to be watched for small signs. Fatalities might result from not knowing the difference between Yang-Po's twirling his queue from left to right and from right to left. But only men born to set crooked things straight would know how to interpret it if a silver cup containing betel-nut juice should be lifted with three fingers instead of two, or set down untasted on the flat of a war drum. Certainly the Capitan China had not drunk his liquor, which was a breach of etiquette, and he had not sat cross-legged in the presence, which was a worse breach.

When the conference broke up, everyone was as wise as when it started, but the whaleboat returned safely to the

junk. That night Jamboo deserted, and despite peril from *ranjows*—sharpened bamboo stakes concealed in the ground, with poison at their tips—made his way, it was known later, to the Malay camp.

"Ten thousand bushels of sorrow, how could I suppose this?" the Capitan China asked Don Narciso.

"Pick up the anchor and make sail," the captain general urged. "This man will tell them the truth about us."

"There is one truth torture cannot wring from him, because he does not know it," the Capitan China said sleepily.

"That is, that we are aground here, on stiff green mud. There is no moving."

"No moving?" Don Narciso gasped.

"No moving. It is best to retire and take opium."

Don Narciso fell back a step, fetched up on the point of his sword, and muttered, "*Perdido*"—lost. Standing in hot sunshine, which struck also those cliff faces of Misfortune's Isle, and the snake-green leaves of the ghastly upas, Don Narciso cast a horror-stricken look about him. Nature perhaps had joined man's conspiracy against his life. He put a hand to his throat. This air was next to impossible to breathe. It might be nothing but a distillation of those venomous leaves, dropped into a man's blood stream.

"Some kinds of trouble can be avoided by fleeing with a bag of dogwood tied to your arm and drinking chrysanthemum-flower wine as you run, but this is not that kind of trouble," the Capitan China informed Don Narciso. "Excuse me, august one, if I spend a part of this evening dancing with the women in the palace of the moon."

This was the same as smoking opium; and the helmsman brought him his pipe. Narciso shut himself into his cabin, and Captain Arad was able to seek out Delfina, who lay in the shadow of the giant mat sail, crumpled across its two horses.

"The *Witch* is not in sight?" she whispered.

"No. But there is worse news. Jamboo, the interpreter, has betrayed us."

"Never."

"He has gone ashore."

"That is perhaps to spy. I must tell you my secret. It was Jamboo who brought me aboard personally on his shoulders in that bag of feathers. He is my slave; he has no thoughts

except what I put into his head. It was I who got him to put into your head the very idea of this expedition, señor. Confess, he was the first to approach you on the subject."

The first. This was true. It had been Jamboo who brought him that English musket and suggested the availability of Yang-Po's junk. Delfina's mirthful eyes gleamed very near.

"You say that you——"

"I. Yes. I was bored to the whites of my eyes in that sleepy Manila. I prayed for anything—pirates, a change of husbands. Then Jamboo came with that musket, and I had sent him to you before I thought twice."

"Well?"

"You see. He worships me," Delfina explained with a confident motion of her lips.

"Worse and worse. He must think his chances of acquiring you outright, without let or hindrance, are better from the other side. It's probable now he has bartered away what information he has for the promise of you. No doubt he will go right on worshipping you after he has taken you up into his bamboo house and set you to pounding betel nut," Arad went on a little ferociously. "They worship white women here traditionally. The story is that they have got one penned up in this cursed tree hanging over our heads, but I don't know."

"You frighten me!" Delfina cried. "You think, señor——"

"I frighten you too late. And I don't know what I think. I think the earthquake should have swallowed you. I think I ought to let these Dyaks have you. They know how to treat infidelity."

"Infidelity? Señor—señor!"

"Isn't that the name for it, when a wife tries to get rid of her husband by taking advantage of his weakness for titles? These Dyaks, for a less offense, would bury you to the waist and stone you with medium-sized stones. That's the penalty in their code. Well, is Jamboo's worship worth this? I suppose you return it. No doubt you two will live together happily, once Don Narciso's brains have been eaten and his head hung in the smokehouse."

"You are beside yourself," Delfina cried faintly. "How can you doubt that it is you I worship? From the very instant of my vesper prayer, señor——"

"Chut."

Doña Delfina was as silent as if he had closed his hand about her throat. There was a sound of guitars forward in the hands of the Indian chamber band, playing to keep Don Narciso's spirits up. This gust of music died, and there was nothing but a spluttering of firecrackers, a creaking of the bamboo quarter galleries under the tread of yellow feet, a bubbling of oil in the cook room. They were boiling it in three cast-off whalers' try-pots, to pour down on the heads of pirates. Captain Arad, looking down at Delfina's dark slenderness, saw her shoulders move. She was sobbing quietly. He felt like a warrior whose best weapon has been struck out of his hand in the very hour of battle.

"Come," he said softly. "I must get you out of this ship before the attack."

It was dark enough on the table-land over the upas tree, but Arad went fast, scarcely waiting for Delfina to get her breath. She was sopping wet in her striped silk pantaloons and piña shirt; but she had swum away from the ship's side with her head well out of water, unwilling to get her hair wet; and now, withdrawing thorn hairpins, she let the dry hair down round her modestly.

Captain Arad had a coil of rattan rope on his arm and a canvas bag in his fist, with food, torches and water. The climb here by that series of notched logs hung against the face of the cliff had not been easy. The notches in the logs were far apart, forcing him to bring his knee practically to his chin for each step; and most of the way he had carried Delfina, lashed bodily against his back with a few turns of the rattan.

"Here's the mouth of that cave I spoke of," he said, barring her way with his arm. "It's crammed full of birds' nests, and there may be a bat or two, but nothing to frighten you. You'll have food and water, and rope to help you down when the time comes. I've told you that we are as good as dead men on the junk. Jamboo, your friend, has told those beggars that our powder is worthless; and they outnumber us ten to one. But there's still a chance to save O'Cain's skin and yours. I don't know what's delaying him. He may have struck on a shoal, he may have foundered. Well, say he has; say he's sitting in an open boat now with the salt stinging him and

only a pillow case of moldy bread between his knees, he's still making for the island."

Delfina didn't answer, and Arad, prodded by the mention of O'Cain, asked out of a clear sky, "Do you wear stockings in Manila?"

Delfina had seemingly not heard one syllable of this. She murmured, her lips stiff with horror, "I cannot be left here. Señor, no, no. I had rather the poison of the upas killed me. . . . How near it is. It is not twenty feet down to Ninepin Rock, and from there I could easily jump into the top of the tree. . . . Señor capitan, I am growing numb already. I cannot feel my toes; my hands are cold. Do you not feel yourself a dreamy something here, as if—as if our souls had slid out of our bodies?"

"No. The soul is the grain, the body is the sack containing it, Yang-Po says. When the grain—the soul—is out, the sack loses its shape. But you are evidently still in possession of your soul, señora. You will be able to give O'Cain his signal."

"His signal?"

"These torches."

"I had forgotten. . . . They say there are no fish in the waters round this island, and that birds flying over it drop dead."

"Birds are mortal. They must drop dead somewhere."

"Still, nothing is growing here. Not so much as a shrub."

"I don't deny this tree has poison. Its sap is a kind of yellow froth, and Dyaks put it in a hollow reed with ten folds of linen round it. But it's nonsense to say it poisons the air or withers the soul."

"Still, the manchineel——"

"I know. But a drop of dew from the manchineel must actually fall on your skin to blister it. There's another tree—I forget its name, but it shakes like a reed if you touch it, and it will wrestle you down if you pick it up by the roots. For that matter, I've seen fire coming from the camphor tree in Houqua's gardens at Canton, but it's a queer kind of fire that won't even singe the hair."

Yang-Po's junk, hung all round with scarlet lanterns, gleamed in the blue abyss under their heels, and in the shadow of the upas tree.

"At least, do not leave me for a moment," Delfina mur-

mured pathetically. She tiptoed dangerously near the edge of the cliff, and Arad, with a restraining arm around her, felt her hair like the brushing of black flame against the back of his hand. "You say a woman is supposed to be imprisoned in this tree?"

"A white woman, the story is. She had sinned. The bitterness of her tears mingling with the sap is what gives the poison strength. Her imprisonment is her power."

"Her power for evil!" Delfina cried, shuddering closer.

"Well, anyway, as long as she's nipped here, just so long these fellows go on getting a first-class poison for their blow pipes. But it's on the cards, they all admit, that sooner or later she'll escape. And that, if I'm any judge, will knock them cold as a gun. . . . I must get back," he muttered, without, however, stirring hand or foot.

"No, señor," Delfina said in a very small voice.

There must certainly be some subtle poison in this tree—or was it the poison of Delfina's iron little will? It was the sort of poison that forces a man to ply himself with arguments. Why, after all, should he return to the junk? Why stir himself to save the life of that opium-fogged literary graduate or the still less useful captain general of Zamboanga? It was better looking down from this safe aerie, with Delfina's head ever so lightly posed against his shoulder. . . . But where could she have learned that habit of the Dyak women of binding up flowers in the hair at night, so as to impart a fragrance to the strands? . . . He breathed deep.

"I will not have you killed before my eyes," Delfina faltered, and grew heavy in his arms.

"If I am killed, my thousand pieces of gold," Arad whispered, using the words of the Malay warrior to his principal wife on parting, "wind about me this yellow sash from your waist, strew my body with petals from your hair, let my sightless eyes feel your salt tears, and may my ears hear the whisper of your faithful soul, borne to me on the winds of the eternal."

"You tear me in pieces. . . . Señor, they are doomed. Let them die, and let us die here by ourselves, apart, in a day or two—under God's frown. Or possibly, if God wills——"

"You are a worse poison than the upas!" Captain Arad shouted. He thrust her away from him into the cave's narrow mouth. Before the drumming of the swallows' wings had died,

he was over the cliff's edge and halfway down that dangerous log ladder.

The Capitan China, very somber in his mulberry-colored jacket, had with difficulty brought himself back from the arms of those women in the palace of the moon. What he saw on board the junk inclined him to return forthwith to that celestial employment, which had no moral reckoning. The cannoneers were piling up lumpy cannon balls of malleable iron between the guns; the largest of which, cracked from end to end of its barrel, but tightly wrapped with many windings of a good quality of silk, had a red label on the breech which read, The Solitary Idea. But the solitary idea of this gun was to frighten the enemy by posing in the mere likeness of a gun, as Yang-Po well knew.

Brass oil cups with floating cotton wicks burning in the bottoms of buckets threw a weird light into the sweating yellow faces of the stone carriers, who were piling huge bowlders and red lacquered stinkpots in the quarter galleries; and the black soldiers of Don Narciso were aiding with noisy prayers.

Don Narciso himself, the fierce gleam of his undaunted glass eye within a foot of the Capitan China's face, cried out, "Are no measures to be taken?"

The Capitan China said, "Ter-Haar, thou son of a burnt mother, hand here the rice spoon."

A cosmopolitan spirit, he believed that superstitions, like religions, had their grain of truth. Ter-Haar, a Malay seaman, brought a huge wooden spoon to which lumps of rice still clung; and the Capitan China muttered an incantation which would have dropped the arms of Dyak rowers at their sides if it could have been brought to their attention. But in the very midst of it the Capitan China's head fell forward, he lapsed for whole heartbeats into that favorite world of his, more vast and inconclusive, whose parapets swarmed with women of the moon. Their eyes were like sloes and their fingers twined in his pigtail. Still the earth would not let him go.

"If our enemies prevail after all these exertions, it is just. It is because we have maltreated them in a former life," he muttered sleepily. Arad shook him savagely.

"This ship is bedlam!" the Salem master cried. "What are those devils yelling for down there?"

"They are giving orders," the Capitan China said, as if already asleep and answering some question put to him in a dream. "They are all commanders in their own right."

He sank to his knees. Arad, seizing his pigtail, took a hitch with it to a piece of ratline stuff overhead. Yang-Po, his heels off the deck, smiled beatifically, and remained hanging, with his head fallen forward and his arms folded on his chest, in the customary attitude of a pilot.

"Your kindness to me," he said faintly, "is like the touch of spring on a dying tree."

"Hist! They are coming!" Don Narciso cried to Arad. There was a moment of comparative quiet, but even so, the rolling of a Malay oar in its rattan grommet could hardly have been distinguished from the sound of a fish jumping for a moth. The dazzle of lights necessary to the Chinese in battle made it impossible to see a dozen feet away from the junk's side.

"These fools," Arad muttered, "will probably dump all those stones into the water at the first rattle of an oar."

"What—what tortures do these tribes use with prisoners of war?" Don Narciso asked thickly.

"They have no invention, really," Arad answered, staring toward the mangrove jungle. "Ordinarily they bind a man face down to a bamboo platform with a hole in it just at the fifth rib; and a sharpened palm shoot just under the hole grows into the victim's heart. Nature is swift here. The palm shoot kills in from twelve to twenty hours. If they have a little more time they smear a man's naked body with wild honey and hold him crushed down against an ant's nest. That is more artistic."

Don Narciso pulled at the ends of his mustache in quick succession with the same hand.

"The thing is, not to be caught. And let me warn you now, Excellency, against those long poles of theirs ending in flesh hooks. When they get close enough, they shove these things over the rail and drag you overboard, like spearing eels. Keep in the middle of the deck until the stinkpots have been thrown."

The gong in the distant banyan struck once. Captain Arad ran down three or four bamboo ladders and came to the guns. The gunners stood waiting in white clothes, with crim-

son symbols for victory and happiness scrawled on their backs, and matches smoking in their hands. The powder tubs were uncovered, but since the powder was hopelessly bad, there was no harm in that. Through an open sea door, Arad could see the Queen of Heaven, with countless cups of cold tea untasted at her knees. Centuries ago, a virgin, she had saved her brother, who was on the point of drowning, and had been deified. This accounted for these prostrations, thumpings, decapitations of fowls, and the knocking of already flattened noses on the teakwood deck.

A voice cried in Arad's ear, "Do you not hear, my officer, that wailing cry of a night bird? That will guide them. If it is in front of them, they retreat; but if it is behind them, they advance."

A heart-stopping yell all round the junk, with a mad outburst of gong music, showed how the pirates had taken advantage of that bird's advice. Jamboo was known to be able to interpret cleverly the language of birds, and he would naturally favor an attack. The Chinese ship comrades yelled "Hi-yi-yi!" and began to roll their bowlders overboard. They also rushed up to the galleries giant ladles of boiling oil, slopping over at the edges. And they threw thousands of firecrackers. But they could see nothing—not so much as the shapes of those murderous proas—and they were in too much of a hurry to be rid of their bowlders. It was unlikely that Seriff Sahibe had risked more than a handful of his proas to draw this clumsy fire of stones. Even now a splash and roll of oars showed that he was in retreat.

"We have beaten them off!" Don Narciso cried, running to the ship's side.

"It took the whole of our artillery to do it," Arad reminded him. "They have simply drawn our fang. They'll be back before we have time to boil more oil."

"Where shall I take my stand?" Don Narciso asked fearfully.

"Ask the Queen of Heaven," Arad answered.

The proas were closing with the junk again; and out of nowhere, at the end of a shining bamboo pole sliding along the rail over the cold, stiff-necked cannon, a hideously pronged flesh hook appeared. It drifted straight for Don Narciso. The unlucky captain general was paralyzed with

horror. It was plain that he was not going to be able to exert himself to dodge this hook, and Arad got a hand in his collar and yanked him to his knees. The hook passed over their heads; and staring up at it, those two looked straight into an unexpected burst of yellow fire, coming from the limestone cliffs of Misfortune's Isle.

"It's the upas tree!" Arad shouted.

In fact, it was the upas tree that had mysteriously broken into flame. It was a giant torch, a deadly wand, flourished over their heads, destroying the secrecy of the attack and touching the hearts of warriors cold in the very heat of battle ardor. The blood-shot eyes of those followers of Seriff Sahibe rolled in their heads; for they had seen a sight which filled them with despair and terror. There was a recoiling clash of oars, spears and muskets, an indescribable banging of gongs. When the Chinese up the river had tried to frighten away a plague of locusts by beating on gongs, and again, when they had tried to banish an eclipse of the moon by the same means, the Dyaks had sneered; but they had reason now to call on all their gongs. For not even Arad's phlegmatic western eyes had failed to see, rising as if out of the heart of the flame itself, and drifting fast, with wide-flung arms and streaming hair, a woman's shape vanishing against the limestone cliffs.

And not even Arad was certain, for that second, that this was not the upas prisoner, the very soul of poison, escaping, and in a mood to call down tardy vengeance from the black skies.

Captain Arad and Captain Michael O'Cain sat with the old Hong merchant, Houqua, in his gardens at Canton. Houqua's house was like a string of Pompeiian villas, delicately carved and gilded, hung with horn lanterns ending in red silk tassels. Priceless silk paintings adorned the walls, and here and there was scrawled in thick brush strokes the symbol of happiness.

The three friends sat outdoors by night at a black lacquered table under an ancient camphor tree. This terrace was paved with polished granite, and granite blocks of high luster edged the fish pond, where lotus leaves floated and where a company of eight ducks were performing figures to the music of a bamboo flute. This flute was in the hands of an entertainer—one

of the Disciples of the Pear Garden—in an opposite pavilion. Arad got up restlessly and strolled to the water's edge.

Lanterns were everywhere. They hung from the ivory balustrade of the steep little bridge over the fish pond, from the eaves of the house, from the lower branches of the camphor tree and from the two stone towers on the river's bank. The bank itself was paved, but with rough granite, the blocks dogged one to another with iron dogs, and sloping gradually under water.

"Pulo Chalacca—that was the name of it," O'Cain muttered to Houqua. "Misfortune's Isle. 'Tis well named. Jamboo, I hear, was stoned to death with medium-sized stones —no one of them, mind you, big enough to kill him outright; but in the end they wore him down. Those pirates ran away so fast they left Seriff Sahibe's pet anaconda behind them, and took the women and children in the old proas. Yang-Po is nothing now but a chambermaid for the birds'-nests caves; he goes around burning sulphur in them and making inducements to the birds to build again. 'Take little and give much'—that's his motto now."

"And Doña Delfina?" Houqua inquired.

"Well, she got back her little man with the glass eye, it's true, but still and all, there she is in Manila, and goes out at four o'clock, when the sea breeze springs up, and the little postilion ahead of her in his shiny hat on the gray horse's back. Maybe once a week she can watch the halfbreed women, with their hair down, waltzing with their chins on their partners' shoulders—but what does that avail?

"And there's Arad, here, Houqua. I've had Chinese doctors to him; they've taken his pulse in both arms from the wrists to the shoulders. There's some out about him, and they don't know what. Misfortune's Isle—that's the long and short of it. Maybe I was well out of it. Still, I would have given a shipload of broken silver for a sight of that prisoner in the tree, breaking loose in her glory and flying free at the end of that rope tied to Ninepin Rock. Whatever the custom in Manila, Houqua, she wore no stockings there. It was necessary to the scheme to have her looking like an immortal. And haven't I heard you say yourself we shall have no clothes in heaven, because, although bodies have souls, it's not likely that clothes have souls to match? Or if they do, who's to guarantee

that the clothes will die with the body, and not sooner or later?"

"There are no soulful garments," Houqua agreed, tracing a symbol of happiness in the air with his pipe stem.

"Right. So there was I, a week late in the *Witch*, what with her grounding and ourselves dropping her guns over the side and buoying them, and rolling all the provisions and water casks aft to work her off, and then fishing up the guns again. All I got was hearsay. Narciso Crispo's expedition, when I got there, would have been just a collection of heads hanging in the head halls with tufts of grass in the ears and orange cowries for eyes, if Doña Delfina hadn't put that upas to the torch. Well, it's certain the king will send them out a patent of nobility. They're grandees of Spain this minute; Narciso is as good as Count of Zamboanga. And why not? Oughtn't a man to be ennobled for seeing his wife float head-first out of a burning tree on a desert isle, and he with not the first suspicion of her being there? It was enough to blind him in his glass eye, and I told him so."

It was strange, Houqua said. Yes, certainly it was Number One curio pigeon. Strange business. He had heard tell of the upas poison.

"You have an art with trees yourself," O'Cain said, pointing at a maidenhair with fan-shaped leaves. This tree had been tortured into the likeness of a pagoda by confining its roots in stone crocks, and by other means. Here and there on the terrace were other trees, trimmed in the images of fish, camels and elephants. "You can all but make trees weep with the torture, as you do your women; but you do not know how to confine a woman in a tree. It's a wonderful poison results, they say, when it's quickened with lime juice. It works with a sharp burning in the head, and death. It's criminals condemned to die, they tell me, that are sent to tap the poison; and they give them leather hoods to put over their heads, and tell them to go toward the tree with the wind at their backs; and even so, only one in ten returns.

"Well, is Captain Arad poisoned then? He's still about on his feet. Here he is with every reason to feel satisfied—a saving voyage, with the brotherhood digging antimony ore for him at Pulo Chalacca, and he with birds' nests worth their weight in silver. . . . Hist, here he is."

"Birds' nests," Arad repeated, stepping out of the shadow of the camphor tree, which had a play of silver sparks out of its twigs and leaves. "We had better stick to birds' nests, Mike. The raw nest, after the bird has flown, but before the egg has been laid. And I can sell you nests, Houqua, as big as a quarter orange, some of them, at forty Spanish dollars the pound."

Houqua blinked his eyes. Across the fish pond one of the Disciples of the Pear Garden cracked his whip, and the performing ducks turned as one duck and swam toward him like mad.

"The last duck gets a taste of the whip!" O'Cain chortled.

"Why? There has to be a last duck," Arad muttered darkly.

"Which proves the necessity of punishment on this earth!" O'Cain roared.

Bird's-nest soup was put before them in three blue bowls. Arad dipped a spoon into this fabled soup. It would, Houqua assured him, put fat around the ribs, make old men young and young men able, and perform other marvels, such as making pirates homeless and filling the coffers of Salem merchant princes on the other side of the world. Yet it seemed to Arad that considering how hard it was to get, the soup was rather tasteless. His thoughts were far away. He asked himself how these two could agree so glibly that garments—say the flowered muslin or the striped pantaloons of the valiant Delfina—had no soul. As well say there had been no soul in that outbreathed "*Adiosito*" from the cave's mouth—farewell for a little, with that wraith of a promise of return in it. And as if he had been himself the last duck, the trader felt across his own shoulders the crack of the whip, and was aware that the upas poison, in some form, was in his veins, only not quickened; and that it had a power to tarnish the most gilded triumph.

A MAN OF THE WORLD

BY JOHN HELD, JR.

FROM *Scribner's*

JOHN HELD, JR.

has wearied of illustrating other people's stories and decided to write his own. His tales about young moderns collected in "Grim Youth" prove him as brilliant a writer as he is an artist.

FROM Greenland's icy mountains to Florida's coral strand, from the rock-ribbed coast of Maine to the sun-kissed shores of California, I tell you, my friends, we must——"

"Aw, nuts!" said Spug Harkness as he turned off the radio. Spug took great delight in being rude to prominent statesmen. He had once played "I'm just a Vagabond Lover" on the saxophone while President Hoover was delivering an important message to the taxpayers.

Spug was seventeen years old. He told everyone that he was eighteen, as being young embarrassed him. He had tried not shaving his upper lip, but it didn't seem to do much good. He had quite a local reputation for copying my drawings. He sent me a number of them once, drawn in pale-blue writing ink. I never returned them, so he gave up art and took up the tenor-banjo.

He was at this time an occupant of the Kappa House. He shared a room with two other members. They were all about the same age. The room had been originally decorated in rather good taste, but the boys had made several major improvements. The decorator had never intended that the carefully chosen bridge lamp should be used as a necktie rack. On it hung perhaps thirty cravats, only two being fit to be worn. The hoarding of old neckwear is a habit that begins early in the masculine programme.

On the gate-legged table in the centre of the room were three pairs of rather soiled tennis shoes that were curled up in front like skis, a few old theatre programmes, a bowl overflowing with dead cigarette ends and a half-used Eskimo pie, a package of Luckies containing, what had been at one time, four cigarettes, but they were now empty tubes of tissue paper. The tobacco had slipped out, long since. But it was a ritual for everyone who entered the room to pick up this package, discover that the cigarettes were useless, and then put the package back on the table. There was also a torn

sweat shirt, and atop of everything was a saxophone that lacked a reed.

One of the drawers in a painted chest contained a collection of miscellaneous textbooks, and on the book-shelf was an open bundle of laundry. The wall paper behind the telephone stand was covered with wild hieroglyphics, that when translated were telephone numbers and addresses, but one had to know the key in order to decipher them. The year before, when the room had been papered, all the numbers had been covered over and the boys had lost many friends, as there was no other record of the addresses and phone numbers.

Near the window was what once had been an over-stuffed chair, but which constant occupancy had made more like the throne of a railroad crossing watchman. In its tired upholstery an investigator might find several soiled pocket handkerchiefs, a few small metal tubes that had once contained lip-stick, and a full peck of lint and tobacco crumbs, mixed with burned-out paper matches.

The entire interior of the apartment was a bit untidy, but there was no mistake about its having been lived in, very much lived in.

Spug went out into the hall and did a short but snappy tap dance on the bare floor at the edge of the well-worn carpet. He went from room to room. If the room was occupied he borrowed a cigarette; if the room was unoccupied he searched through the bureau drawers and opened packages of laundry for a shirt. His search was unsuccessful as the clean laundry was not due for another day.

On the way back to his room, he went into the bathroom, and came out with a magazine and a small shaving mirror. He entered his own room and settled down in the big chair by the window, put the mirror on the window sill, and carefully scanned his features for blemishes in his complexion. He soon completed this survey and then proceeded to draw large black mustachios on the half-tone illustrations of Clara Bow and other luminaries of the talking-pictures. He then blocked out a tooth in Buddy Rogers's smile and he was adding the last strokes to a goatee on Laura La Plante when the phone rang.

"Mr. Harkness talking." He always answered the telephone in this manner, for to him it was a dignified procedure.

"Is that you, Spug? This is Peggy. Where are you?"

It was a feminine voice, and the question was absurd because she knew all the time that he was at one end of the connection.

"I've been waiting here at the drug store for hours, and when you didn't come, I just called up to see if you were sick or something."

Spug never started for his dates until they telephoned him from the rendezvous.

"I'm all right. I'll be right down. I was cramming on my Latin and wasn't watching the time. Wait for me, Baby. I'll only be a minute."

He put on his coat. He went over to the small mirror on the window edge and again searched his complexion. He looked at the reflection of his throat for any possible ingrown hairs. He had been shaving for two months, but somehow was never able to find any ingrown hairs. He sighed, pushed his hands deep in his trouser pockets, forcing his belt down over his hips. Then he rubbed his chin, turned on the radio and went out.

Spug found Peggy waiting just inside the drug-store door. He greeted her with that unconcern that is so noticeable in youth.

"How is it, Baby? Been waiting long?"

"No," with unconcern also typical of the feminine, but so false. "I phoned you as soon as I got here."

Peggy best may be described as exactly like fifty other girls of her age in the town; she dressed like them, she talked like them, she thought like them, and her mannerisms were the same as all the rest. She was one of a family of, oh say, five or six children. She was employed in some obscure position. Spug had never bothered to find out just what she did. She took her entire salary home every Tuesday, but always had carfare with her. She was a "home girl" as the tabloids say. She had made a deep study of home life, the home life of the popular movie stars. She was consumed with the tender romance of Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Joan Crawford, and she thought Lupe Velez and Gary Cooper were sweet.

"Want a soda?"

"No, I'm not thirsty."

"What do you want to do?"

"Oh, let's take a walk."

"All right, let's go."

The evening was perfect. It was early autumn and the season was at the height of a beautiful performance. The air was just beginning to get crisp, but was still warm enough for comfort, and it was dry. A few leaves had fallen, and some of the more tidy small householders had burned them at the curb, and the thin blue smoke hung suspended in the air. It was the sort of evening when the day tried hard not to submit to darkness, but finally lost its courage and gave up, just as a big circular yellow moon rose slowly in the east. In a word, it was a "big evening."

They walked down the cement sidewalk that bordered the main motor parkway.

"Gee, Spug, I didn't think I was going to be able to come out to-night. Dad was giving me a lot of blah about going out every night. He said decent girls didn't go out every night. You still think I'm decent, don't you, Spug? You do think I'm decent?"

Peggy suddenly became intense with this last question.

"Sure. I think you're decent. What do you think?" replied Spug.

"I'm glad, Spug, because I don't know what I'd do if you didn't think I was decent. Give me a cigarette, will you, sweetheart?"

He took a package from his pocket, extracted a cigarette and lighted it. He knew if she tried to light it herself that she would blow out the match, because girls always blow through a cigarette when they light them. He handed it to her. She took a deep draught and inhaled the smoke to the bottom region of her lungs. As she blew it out, she picked some tobacco from her tongue.

"Life's a funny thing, isn't it?" Spug said. "When you think about it. Sometimes I wish I wasn't able to think. Life would be a lot simpler if one couldn't think. I was a lot more contented when I was young. It would be swell not to have any imagination. It would make things a lot easier. Sometimes I get thinking, until I'm nearly nutty, trying to figure out what it's all about. I don't mean the little problems like studying, or eating, or who's going to win the football game.

I mean the deeper things. I wonder if we were put on this earth for a purpose or did it all happen by accident. I don't know. I don't know. But then, we're here; we can't change that, so we've got to make the best of it. Every man has got to work out his own destiny the best way he can. For instance, I had to stop drinking. I found I couldn't stand it. It was getting the best of me. Figured that all myself, so I'm off the stuff. But, I guess the man who goes through life with his eyes closed is the happiest. I wish I could do that, but I'm different, because I'm always trying to find out what it's all about. Then again, something happens that makes me think that what is going to happen is going to happen, regardless of anything we try to do about it. That's destiny, I suppose, and all we can do is make the best of it when it happens."

Peggy made no comment. Spug liked that about her; she was a good listener. That is, she gave a man that impression. They walked on—with slow measured tread. Peggy started to hum softly. She hummed her version of a popular air. She didn't get quite the right notes, what she was humming sounded rather like the classic that the modern composer had borrowed his theme from. Spug continued with his monologue.

"You know, Baby, I've been thinking lately. It's funny how a man will get thinking, isn't it? I've been thinking about life. There's more in it than appears on the surface. You know, life is very complex," Spug went on, without looking at the girl by his side. "I've been trying to figure out a lot of problems. Now take me. When I look back at what I was two years ago, I must of been terrible. I didn't know what the right thing was then. I didn't know the right kind of clothes from the wrong kind; I didn't know about manners, except the wrong steer that Dad and Mother tried to give me. I must have been terrible then. These last two years have made a big difference in my life. I was terribly narrow-minded.

"You wouldn't believe it, but two years ago I actually wore a hat—sounds silly to you, knowing me now, doesn't it? I've found that a man can't learn about life from books. All the old authors are all wrong, because they wrote about the problems of their time, and they're all wet compared to the problems of to-day. Yes, Baby, a man has got to work out his own life according to his own philosophy. A man has to

check himself up every so often, otherwise first thing you know, he is drifting with the tide. No, Baby, it's a big mistake for a man of my background to let his emotions govern him. First thing you know, you don't know where you are. Now take some of the other fellows. They believe everything that's told them. They don't think for themselves, and what will the result be? First thing they know, they're on their own, and it's a question of sink or swim, and they're sunk before they start."

"Yes, I understand," said Peggy, but the truth was, she was making no effort to understand.

"That's what I like about you, Baby, a man can talk to you, and you know what he's talking about. You're different from a lot of the other girls around this place," said Spug.

"Oh, I think you're wonderful, Spug. I like to listen to you talk. Let's find a bench and sit down, my shoes hurt," said Peggy as she started to limp.

They walked on until they were opposite a bench that was shaded from an arc light by a convenient bough of shrubbery, and they sat down.

They sat in silence for a moment. Spug slumped on the bench and placed his arm on the top of the back rest. Peggy sat back against his arm.

"Go on, talk to me some more, Spug," pleaded Peggy. But Spug was silent, the interruption of sitting down had broken his thread of philosophy. She didn't insist on his talking. So they both just sat and looked at the moon without seeing it. Her hands lay limply in her lap. He reached over and took one of her hands. It was not a demonstration, he just rubbed her fingers and played with her cheap little ring.

"Oh, Spug, I think you're wonderful," she said as she looked at him with liquid eyes. He heaved a deep sigh and his other hand slipped down on her shoulder. She lifted his hand from her lap and pressed it against her chest. If Peggy had been more mature I would say she pressed his hand to her bosom, but she had no bosom. It was still a chest. She drooped with complete submission, and kissed him with parted lips.

The autumn season had come and gone. Winter was in full swing. A heavy snow was falling slowly. All was white until you stepped in the snow, and then the shoes left a dark, wet

footprint. All this snowing was going on outside, but inside the room occupied by Spug and his companions the steam was full on. The windows were closed tight, and hermetically sealed with adhesive tape. Spug's chief exercise at this time was blowing smoke rings, and that could not be done with any degree of satisfaction in a place where there was the slightest draft. The air was thick with tobacco fumes, and had been breathed over and over again. Four young men including our Spug were playing poker with a sticky deck of playing cards, using matches for chips. The radio was tuned up to high pitch, and was coming full blast on some dull subject, and no one was listening. The telephone managed to make itself heard above the racket. It was answered by the nearest boy.

"Hey, it's for you, Spug. Sounds like a woman."

"Yeah," said Spug to the phone, and to his companions. "Hey, turn that radio down, this is important."

"Hello," back at the telephone.

"Oh, Spug, is that you? This is Peggy."

"Yeah, what do you want?"

"Oh, Spug, I've got to see you."

"Yeah, what about?"

"Oh, Spug, I can't tell you over the phone. I've got to see you."

"Why can't you tell me now?"

"But, I can't. I just can't, that's all."

"Well, if you can't tell me now, it can't be very important."

"But it is important, I tell you. I've got to see you."

"Where are you?"

"Then you will see me? I'm at the drug store."

"I didn't say I'd see you. I'm awfully busy right now."

"Whether you're busy or not, I've got to see you."

"Wouldn't to-morrow do? I tell you, I'm busy!"

"Oh hang up and deal these cards. It's your deal," called his companions at cards.

Spug pulled a wry face at them.

"No, to-morrow may be too late, I've got to see you now. I can't tell you over the phone. I've got to talk to you. I've got to see you!"

"All right," he said with disdain. "I'll be right down."

"Oh, Spug, I've got to see you. I'll wait here at the drug store."

Spug hung up the receiver and ran his fingers through his hair.

"You birds play three-handed until I get back. I've got to go down and see a fellow who wants to sell a Buick."

He put on a pair of galoshes over his house slippers and struggled into a moth-eaten raccoon coat.

"I won't be long," he said as he stood with the door open.

"Shut that door!" thundered the other three as with one loud voice, so he went out slamming the door.

Peggy was waiting at the same place as usual, near the drug-store door.

"What do you want to see me about?" said Spug.

"Oh, hello, Spug, I can't tell you here, let's walk."

"If it's so important, why don't you tell me now?"

"Oh, Spug, I can't here. It's too—too—well, important."

"Well, come on then."

They started down the same street where they had walked last fall. They walked without speaking, faster than before, and they unconsciously arrived at the same bench where they had sat in the yellow moonlight. He brushed the snow from the bench with the skirts of his overcoat, and they sat down. There was no moon this time, and the heavy snow continued to fall slowly. Spug spoke:

"Now, for Pete's sake, what's on your mind?"

She hesitated.

"Oh, Spug, I hate to have to tell you, but—but—it's—I'm——"

"Come on, come on, I've got to get back."

"Spug, remember, I told you I was frightened that night?"

"Yeah, well, what was there to frighten you?"

"Well, I'm terribly frightened now. I'm having——"

"Come on, spill it, Baby. I've got to get back. I can't sit here all week."

"Spug, darling, I'm—I'm going to—oh, Spug, you know."

"Yeah—are you—sure?"

"Of course, I'm sure, what did you think? I haven't——"

"Yeah, I know, but are you sure?"

"Oh, Spug, I'm positive."

"Well, what do you want me to do?"

"Oh, Spug. If father finds out, he'll kill you."

"Yeah, how is he going to find out?"

"Oh, he'll know in time. Then he'll make me tell him who it was."

"What's the big idea, Baby, trying to scare me with your father?"

"No, of course I'm not, Spug. But what can I do?"

"It's easy enough to get fixed up."

"But, Spug, you'll have to help me."

"Yeah, I know. All right. I get my money from home in a couple of days, then I'll see you, so don't worry any more. And listen, Baby, you aren't scaring me. I don't know if you're on the level or not and I haven't any way of finding out, except when you say it. And you know darned well you've got everything on your side. I haven't got a chance. You know the whole world is for you in a case of this kind. They believe you and I'm stuck. You've got the policemen on your side. The law will protect you, and it's laying for me."

He saw she was crying. He was always a little embarrassed when a woman cried, so he assumed a more masculine manner. He petted the shoulder of her rain coat.

"I tell you, Baby, that's my philosophy. In a case of this kind I always take a woman's word."

He rose to his feet.

"I'll see you in a couple of days when my check comes. Call me up. I've got to go back to the house now and see a man about a Buick."

MLLE. IRENE THE GREAT

BY NUNNALLY JOHNSON

FROM *Saturday Evening Post*

NUNNALLY JOHNSON

tells most of his rollicking stories in the SATURDAY EVENING POST. *As "The Roving Reporter" of the New York* EVENING POST *he gathered many fantastic and laughably human data about his fellows.*

THE circus had its first performance of the season this evening, and afterward Dexter and I fetched up in a cafeteria a block or so from the Garden for a brace of sandwiches and some milk. The joint was pretty well crowded with the after-theater gallery trade, and the only places we could find were at a long table opposite a couple of sad-looking johns fiddling with messes of Bismarck herring. I would have said at the time, just going by their faces, that they were discovering that they didn't like herring—not this herring anyway.

I don't think Dexter noticed, though, until suddenly, as we went innocently into our forage, the whole table shook like an aspen and we looked up, startled, to see one of the guys—apparently the older—suffering badly from an attack of the trembles; he was sitting sideways, his back to his pal, who was patting him sympathetically on the shoulder. Then he pulled himself together somewhat, and straightening around, put his elbows on the table and rested his head in his hands.

"Sorry," he mumbled.

Dexter stared at him for a moment and then turned to me and shook his head sadly. "Wife ill, children in jail, business failed, and the Yanks five runs behind, going into the ninth, J. Wilburforce Pickthall faced a future far from bright," he guessed.

"It's probably the herring," I said. "Nothing hits a man harder than a shady bit of herring."

"Under the best of conditions," he agreed, "herring is little short of a gamble."

With that he dismissed the matter and set in to complete the destruction of his ham and cheese on rye. That's all it might have meant to me, too; but a moment later, when I glanced up again, the trembler's pal was wiggling his eyebrows violently in what I gathered was some sort of signal he didn't want Dexter to get. On the spur of the moment I wiggled back, and, greatly encouraged, he threw his whole

soul into another effort; but this time I just nodded to let him know I understood, because the spectacle of two men wiggling their eyebrows at each other across a table has a tendency in time to become ridiculous.

So, when presently Dexter emerged from his plate and rose to push on, I told him I'd decided to stick around; I had an hour to kill before my train pulled out, and I might as well sit here as in Penn Station.

He hadn't got to the door before the trembler poked his pal in the ribs and muttered: "Go ahead. Ask him!"

The pal leaned over confidentially. "I say, Mac," he whispered, "wasn't that Dexter McDonald?"

"Right. Why?"

He turned to the trembler. "He said yes," he reported. The trembler shivered. "Ask him—Dexter McDonald, the circus press agent?" he ordered, and the pal turned back to me again. "Dexter McDonald, the circus press agent?"

I nodded.

"He said yes," the pal relayed once more.

"Don't your friend understand English?" I asked.

"Sure, he understands English. He's just shy," the guy said. "His nerves ain't any good."

"He ought to do something about it."

"He ain't like this all the time," the guy assured me. "It's just about once a year—the night the circus opens."

"Then what does he go for, if it upsets him?"

"He ain't been. He don't ever go. He don't ever want to see a circus again. Whenever it opens, him and I try to have a little night out by ourselves, so's he'll forget; but to-night he got to brooding, and then this McDonald comes in and he recognizes him, and it just kind of got him, that's all."

"I'm sorry, pal," I confessed—"I'm sorry, but I don't get you, at all."

"Well," he hesitated, "it's a funny story——"

The table shook again.

"Not to him," the guy hastened to add, "but when you think about it——"

"Let's hear it," I said. "I got an hour yet."

You see Joe now—the guy said—and you wouldn't believe that several years ago there wasn't no nicer guy you could

want. What I mean, he was really too nice for his own good. Patting dogs on the head, you know, and helping old ladies across the street, and all kind of stuff like that. If you'd knowed him then, you'd have said, "Well, this is certainly a nice guy," and you wouldn't find a guy anywhere any nicer. That's the way Joe was when I used to know him. Well, sir, he was working for a business downtown—a produce business on Washington Street—and he never was much of a fellow for this society stuff, but he used to always make a point to get to the Greenwich Village Pagan Route, because all you got to do is go to it once a year and you got enough addresses and telephone numbers to keep you busy until the next one; and that's what Joe used to do, because he had sense enough to know if you didn't go out with girls some, you'd get to be a helmet.

"A what?" I asked.

"A helmet—one of these guys that never gets out with folks, but just sits around by his self."

"I got you."

Joe used to always go as a pirate. What I mean, everybody dresses up for the Pagan Routes in fancy costumes, you know, and Joe used to always be a pirate. He seen Douglas Fairbanks in that picture *The Black Pirate*, you know, and he wore one of them costumes, like Doug, and if you just seen him pass by quick you'd say, "Well, that does look like Douglas Fairbanks, but he has shrunk a little," because Joe never was a big guy.

He was at one of these Pagan Routes, then, just dancing around, you know, and kidding back and forth with the girls, and he got to dancing with a girl in a white ballet skirt. He started to kidding her, you understand, but she didn't kid back like most of them babies do, but just quiet, you know, and kind of sweet, and Joe got to dancing around with her, and first thing you know he was buying her something to drink at a table and they wasn't kidding at all, but talking about pretty deep things—about life, what I mean!

"You know, kid," he said to her, "somehow you ain't like the rest of these babies around here. You're different—know what I mean?"

"I just can't help it if I'm different," she said. "I reckon I'm just old-fashioned, but it's the way I was brought up."

"Where was you brought up?" Joe asked.

"Oh, all over," she said.

"All over what? Your folks travel?"

"They used to," she said.

Well, that's all she'd say along those lines, but Joe did not care if her folks was railroad brakemen, because the way he looked at it, he didn't have to take down any more telephone numbers. He had all he wanted. He danced with her nearly every dance, and Joe says they must have drank eighteen bottles of root beer, because they nearly bust, and he seen she liked him too.

At one o'clock she said she had to go, and that was pretty early to leave a Route, but she had to catch a Long Island train because she lived out at Elmwood, so Joe taken her to the station in a taxi, and on the way she told him she went to business in town and he could call her either there or in the evenings at Elmwood, but Joe, he made a date right then for the next night.

I tell you, Joe was one of the happiest guys you ever seen. What I mean, he was so happy he nearly got fired the next day, because he got to throwing them cases of eggs and chickens around Washington Street, and if they hadn't stopped him he's liable to have broke all the eggs they had and killed all their chickens, because he was so happy he could not control his self. That's love, Mac!

He was mighty glad, Joe was, because this running around to the Pagan Route every year was getting on his nerves, and what he wanted, he wanted to settle down, what I mean, and have a flat or one of them half houses out in Queens and sort of make something out of his self. He wanted a wife, you know, with a apron, always sweeping out the house and dusting off chairs. That's the way Joe was—all the time had his head in the clouds.

"What I want," he said to her once when they was having one of them deep talks, "I want a nice quiet home, where a guy can come to after he's finished work and sit down and listen to the radio or read the paper, and not any of this jazz-baby stuff every night."

"Well," she said in a kind of funny way, "that's what I'd like too."

Now, a funny thing about all this. You know how it is in New York when you're rushing a girl, the way they got these little-bitsy flats and you can't go to her place much because it's so little you practically got her pa sitting in your lap and her ma frying eggs around your head and the children crawling up and down your coat tails. You know, you got to get your fast work in somewheres else, at Coney, or on the Fifth Avenue busses, or in some movie.

You'd thought, now, a girl's got a place out in a place like Elmwood and a fellow could come out and they could sit around there. But all the time when Joe'd throw out a hint he'd like to come out and get a little air and meet the folks, Kitty—that was her name—Kitty—she'd always have some kind of song and dance about it was so far, or her brothers were all home, or something like that, so Joe had it worse'n most guys. Once when he called up and they answered and he said he wanted to speak to Kitty, he said you'd have thought hell had broke loose, and all he could hear was shouts and thumps, and by the time Kitty come to the phone he was almost deaf.

"What's all the matter out there?" he asked her. "Somebody wrastling somebody in your house?"

"Nothing's the matter," she hedged. "Why?"

"Who was that gorilla that answered the phone?" he asked, thinking it was her brother and they could just kid each other about what a voice he had.

"That wasn't no gorilla," Joe heard her say away off; "that was mamma."

For a minute Joe didn't say anything; there wasn't anything he could think of to say. A guy can't go around calling his girl's ma a gorilla and get away with it. Then he decided she must be kidding; that wasn't any lady's voice.

"What kind of mamma you got," he said, "that sounds like throwing empty beer kegs around?"

This time it was her that didn't say anything and Joe was just about to say, "Hello! Hello! You still there?" when he heard her giggle, and what I mean, he was relieved, because it looked for a minute like he'd shot the works.

"Sap!" she said.

"Hey, don't think you was kidding anybody!" Joe said. "I knowed that wasn't any lady. If that was a lady she'd have to be big as a house to make all that noise."

When he rang off, though, Joe got to thinking what a break he nearly made and he was so upset he had to go get some watteau.

"Watteau?" I asked. "What do you mean—watteau?"

"Sure, watteau," the guy said. "Ice watteau."

"I got you," I said.

Well, sir—he went on—that was certainly a funny one on Joe, I mean the way things turned out, and if he's thought of it once, he's thought of it a million times since. One of those kind of things, you know, you say, "Well, that ought to been a tip-off, and why didn't he kind of look around then and there?" But you can't ever tell, when a guy's in love. You might have went about it the same way—you don't know.

What I mean, Joe was in love. Call me sentimental if you want to, but that's all there was to it. Joe was in love. And it showed in his work too. The way he got to hurling them eggs and chickens around Washington Street, it wasn't long before it come to the attention of his bosses, and he got a raise, because he was easy handling two crates to every other guy's one, and him puny too!

I don't reckon I got to tell you who he went to tell about it to first. It was in a chop-suey joint that night, and Joe got out an old envelope and a pencil, and without her talking much, just looking happy and proud, he showed her what they could do on forty-seven and a half a week, and her not work any more, just stay at home and sweep up a little and cook and give him a kiss when he come home every evening.

"Kid," he told her, "it'll be a pipe. We'll be renting, yes, but it'll be a home—our home—and nobody in it but us—just us, kid; just you and me."

That was Joe, always with his head in the clouds!

But all that evening, Joe told me, she acted kind of funny. She acted like she was scared. She kept saying she wasn't, when Joe'd kid her, but she acted like she was. Joe couldn't get it at all.

"Don't you want to marry me?" he asked her.

"Sure I want to marry you."

"Well, it's set then. All we got to do is give me a knock-down to your ma and show her you ain't getting tied up to no two-headed man or something, and there we are."

"Joe," she said, still kind of funny, "how do you know you're going to like my family?"

"What do I care whether I like 'em or not?" he ask. "I ain't marrying your family. I'm marrying you. No matter what kind of mugs they was, it wouldn't hurt me to go over and see 'em for dinner once every week or so. You bring me out there soon as you can and let's get that all washed up, kid. And don't look so scared."

"I ain't scared," she said again.

Two days later, when he rung her up, it was all fixed. She'd tipped off her family and he was to go out with her that evening and they'd all look at one another. He was to meet her in the Long Island Station under the clock, and don't be late.

What I mean, that was a happy ride for Joe. It looked like to him it was all downhill from then on. If he hadn't been busy talking all the time about what they was going to do when they got married, he'd probably noticed she wasn't hitting on all eight, but he never give it a tumble, he told me, until just before the train got to Elmwood, when she took one of his hands in hers and spoke very solemn.

"Joe," she said, "all families ain't alike. Maybe you ain't seen any like mine. But if you're really crazy about me, Joe, keep your shirt on while you're out here, especially around mamma."

"Kid," he said, "all girls is nervous when they're taking a guy out to meet the family, so I understand. But you ain't got to be nervous, baby, because they ain't going to be any reason why I shouldn't keep my shirt on. What I mean, I'll bet we won't be there more than ten minutes before we'll all be eating out each other's hands. The way I'll be, I'll just put 'em all at their ease."

"My family ain't like other families," she warned him.

"No family is," he told her.

Well, sir, they walked home from the station. It wasn't far—just a block or two down the main stem and then up

a side street, and it was almost like the country. Farther down on the left side of the street Joe could see a little house behind some hedges that looked just like heaven, it was so neat and hid and comfortable, and he was just about to say, "Well, that is some nice dump," when he heard somebody say, "Harrup."

"Say what?" I asked.

"Say 'harrup,'" the guy replied in some embarrassment. "Somebody said, 'Harrup.'"

"What's harrup?"

"Well," he looked around cautiously, "I mean, he said, 'Har-r-r-up-p-p!'"

Half the cafeteria looked over at us, and I can't say that I blamed them. What this guy let loose was terrible. It was a long growl. I smiled a bit, to show I wasn't upset by this shock, and then nodded pleasantly to the guy.

"I got you," I said.

That's what Joe heard—this harrup, what I mean—and it shaken him right down to the gizzard, because, whether he'd thought about it or no, his nerves wasn't none too good, going out like that to be knocked down to your girl's family for the first time.

"What's that!" he said. "What happened then!"

She never give him a tumble.

"That bellow," Joe said to her then; "what was that bellow?"

"Mamma."

"Look here," Joe said; "this ain't no time for kidding. What was that broke loose then?"

"Mamma," she said again, almost whispering.

Joe looked at her close, and he seen she wasn't kidding. It was the real McCoy this time. Somehow it kind of upset him.

"What is your mamma, anyway?" he said. "One of these cow callers?"

They was standing at the end of the walk that led up to the house—this nice little house with the hedge in front. Joe told me later he was a little mixed up because he hadn't ever heard

anything like that before, and Kitty stood looking at him kind of hopeful.

"Joe," she said, "I been trying to tell you my family is different."

"They certainly got different voices," Joe said.

"They're circus people, Joe. Mamma don't work now, because she's too old, of course. But years ago she used to have the lyruns."

"The what?" I asked.

"The lyruns," the guy explained. "You know lyruns, like tigers or hyrenas, but bigger, more hair—lyruns."

"I get you," I said.

"Years ago," Kitty said, "mamma used to be the greatest lyrun tamer in the world. She was Mlle. Irene the Great. She had seven of 'em in her act. Everybody knew her. All the family is circus people but me. There wasn't ever anything I could do, so when mamma had to give it up I come here to make a house for her. We're alone in the world, just mamma and me——"

Well, sir, Joe said she just got to that junction when four men in pink tights run out the house and around the lawn and disappeared in the back.

"Alone!" said Joe. "What are those—ghosts?"

"They're the Four Flying Francos," Kitty said. "They're just practicing a little."

"In your house!"

"Well, two of them are my brothers," she explained. "The other one is our cousin."

"There was four," Joe said.

"I ain't met the other one," she said.

"Oh, well," Joe said, "let's go in. This ought to be sort of like going through the insane asylum."

She had taken his hand again and squeezed it, and they walked up the path to the door. Joe buttoned his coat and straightened his tie and was taking off his derby hat to slick his hair when Kitty opened the door and something flew right past his nose. I don't mean a book or something, but a grown man in pink tights flew right through the air so close he nearly

taken Joe's schnozzle off. Joe ducked and the guy in tights hit the floor like a ton of bricks—oops!

"Shut that door!" somebody yelled, and then two guys started shouting in Italian. Joe grabbed Kitty and his derby hat and jumped outside, slamming the door behind him.

"Maybe we better take a shot at this another day when you ain't got a horde of family here," he said.

"No," she said, "they're just a little busy in the front room. We'll go round the back way."

Well, sir, this turned out to be one of the funniest evenings Joe ever had. What I mean, it was funny in one way, but when you think you was looking at the family you was tying up to, why, you wouldn't call it so funny, I reckon. Anyways, as Joe said, the last thing he'd ever thought Kitty's mother was was a lyrun tamer, to say nothing at all of men shooting through the air in pink tights.

They went in the back way, then, without no mishaps, as you might say. Up in the front of the house, Joe said, you could hear thumps and grunts and alley-oops and everybody shouting Italian, and Kitty led him upstairs, probably where you could hear yourself think. They went into a big room up there, and there was Joe's future ma-in-law.

He didn't any more than see her before he knew that was the lady that let fly that harrup. She was a great big baby, broad in the beam, what I mean, but not so tall, and she had straight iron-gray hair that was bobbed. Joe said it looked like it had been bobbed with a meat ax. She had a face you could grind scissors on, and she was just sitting there nodding, not hearing that hell below at all.

"Harrup!" she said when Kitty come in.

"Mamma," Kitty said, "this is Joe."

"Harrup!" said the old girl.

"Harrup!" said Joe.

"What?" said the old girl.

"My error," Joe said; "I thought that must be Italian or something."

"Put her there, pal," Mlle. Irene said, putting out a mitt like Jess Willard's, "and park yourself."

Joe sat down and put his derby hat on the floor by the side of the chair and got ready for the works.

"Mighty nice being here," he said politely.

"So you're the guy that's marrying my little Kitty, eh?" she shouted. "Well, that's fine. You look like a smart boy—kind of puny, maybe, but I reckon you're all right. When you two counting on hitching up?"

"Pretty soon, I hope," Joe said.

"Good! Where are we going to live?"

Well, sir, that "we" hit Joe like a sock on the potato. For a minute he just stared at Mlle. Irene the Great and then at Kitty, who was looking another way, and he was just going to make one or two remarks to set the old girl correct on that score when in walked a lady dressed up in an Alps climbing costume like them yodelers—a green velvet skirt, a kind of vest with a lot of gold braid on it, and a little peaked cap with a peacock feather sticking up. Without saying anything or looking at anybody, this baby set down a valise she was carrying, opened it, and brang out a trombone, and blew a blast through it right at Joe.

"My sister," Kitty said.

"Pleased to meet——"

"I got to practice."

That's all she said—just said that—and then, with another trial blast or two, went right into "The Stars and Stripes Forever," and I don't have to tell you what a lot of noise you can get out a trombone, and this baby, Joe said, must have been right at the top of her profession, the way she made the windowpanes rattle.

Joe said he and the other two women just sat there. The old she lyrun looked pleased and nodded her head to the tune. When the tune was through she clapped her hands.

"Much better," she said; and turning back to Joe: "We notified the landlord we wouldn't want this house any longer——"

Again Joe was going to say something, when the mountain climber took a running start and sailed into "Ramona," establishing a new record for loud tootling. Joe just looked at her.

"That's a loud horn!" he shouted at Mlle. Irene.

"Loudest in the country!" she shouted back.

"Can't hardly hear for it!" Joe bawled, thinking she'd catch the hint.

"Sister's in the Big Top Solid Gold Band!" Mlle. Irene roared. "That horn's solid gold, almost!"

"Some horn!" Joe agreed.

At that, sister'd taken the nozzle of the trombone out her mouth and said, "There's too much noise here," and got up to go, when she seen Joe's derby hat. She and Joe grabbed for it at the same time, but she got it and hung it on the end of the horn. "Jazz stuff," she said, and played "Cabaret Kisses, They Don't Mean a Thing," through Joe's derby hat. Joe said it was all he could do to stand it.

When she got through she handed Joe's derby hat back and he set it on the floor again, closer to his chair. Sister then picked up her grip and went out, and presently they was all treated to "Slumber On, My Little Gypsy Sweetheart," one room removed, thank God, as Joe phrased it later.

"What I set out to say——" he began.

"Sister's delicate," the old girl explained. "She's got to have perfect quiet or she can't hear her own horn blowing."

"What you said just now about where are we going to live when——" Joe started again.

"All great artists are that way," Mlle. Irene said. "I was that way when I had the cats."

"You mean, when you was the cats?" Joe asked politely.

"I mean when I had the cats—the lyruns. Seven of 'em I had, and if they was a lot of noise going on around I couldn't do myself justice. The cats would get skittish, and I wouldn't mind them getting skittish, because I wasn't any more scared of them lyruns—look, if a lyrun starts at you——"

She had got excited and was on her feet and walking right at Joe, and before he seen what she was at, she'd grabbed his hat. He made a kind of pass to get it back, but the old lady leaped back like a tiger. She lifted a straight chair just like it was a toothpick and was holding it straight out in front of her, legs at Joe, and was waving Joe's derby in the air with her right hand, like she had a whip or something.

"Come at me!" she shouted. "Come right at me! I'll show you how to handle a lyrun that comes at you!"

She was dancing around like Gene Tooney and jabbing this chair at Joe and shouting, "Har-r-rup-p-p!" that Joe said must have been some kind of war cry she had against lyruns.

"Come at me!" she bawled. "What I mean, come at me!"

Joe stalled, but there wasn't anything else he could do, because she looked like she was going to bash his skull in if he didn't do what she said, so he come at her as much like a lyrun as he knowed how to.

Well, sir, he hadn't taken more'n a step at her when she leaped forward, trapped Joe in the legs of that chair, and just run him around that room until he was cockeyed, and then nailed him against the wall, helpless as a baby.

"Hey!" Joe hollered to Kitty. "Call her off, will you?"

"Mamma!"

"Har-r-rup-p-p!" the old girl shouted happily. "That's the way to handle lyruns! That's the way I handled Rex all the time. Rex was a bad cat. He wasn't like Leo and Rajah—no, sir, not at all!"

She let Joe go and he brushed his self off, and when she'd give him back his hat he sat down, wondering what he'd got into. All he could think of, he told me, was this wasn't no kind of a family for a man to get in that wanted a quiet little home in Queens.

He was trying to catch his breath to tell the old lady about their not living together, and there wasn't anything going on in the house except a trombone solo of the High School Cadets in the next room, when he heard something like Wheeler's Cavalry coming up the stairs, and in come the four guys in pink tights.

"Stand back!" said one to Joe, and Joe scuttled his chair back against the wall, remembering to haul his hat with him.

"Watch this one, mamma!" the guy said to Mlle. Irene.

They cleared all the furniture out the middle of the room and two of the guys came over and stood by Joe, their backs to him, and one of the guys squats down on the other side of the room. One was in the middle. Then one of them shouts, "Alley-oop!" and the others all yelled, "Hup!" and the guy in the middle ran at the guy on the other side of the room, who give him a somersault lift and he sailed through the air, hit the two guys in front of Joe, and what I mean, went right between them and bang! hit the floor like the whole house was falling down!

Instead of being killed, in a flash he was scrambling to his feet, shouting, "That wasn't right, mamma—that wasn't right! Somebody got it wrong!" and they all started shouting

in Italian, including the old lady, but all Joe saw was his hat. The guy had dived right into it and it was flatter'n a doormat.

Joe picked it up and his mind was all set. "I'd like to see you outside a minute!" he yelled to Kitty, and he went out in the hall, the girl following him.

"Look at that!" he said.

She looked at it.

"I ain't been here a half hour and they bust my hat!" he said. "Everybody in this house they can't spit unless they got to hold my hat in their hand! Look at it!"

"Oh, Joe!" she wailed.

"A new hat," he told her. "A brand-new hat bought yesterday—and look at it! Busted! Well, kid, I'm sorry, but I reckon I better blow. I'm crazy about you, just like I always said, but things can be carried too far. I just as soon try to keep house in a Bronx Subway station as have all these maniacs around. Tell 'em good night——"

"But, Joe!" she cried. "We can't—you mustn't——" She turned and called, "Mamma! Mamma, come here!"

"What?"

"Come here!"

The old girl came out, leaving the acrobats to argue with themselves who gummed the works.

"Mamma," Kitty said, "Joe says it's all off!"

"All off!" mamma exclaims. "Why, he ain't hardly got use' to us yet!"

"I don't aim to get use' to you," Joe said. "I'm still nuts about Kitty, I never loved any girl like her, but if I thought I was going to have them apes flying around my house all the rest of my days and that horn tooter in there blowing her gullet out, why, I'd just as leave cut my throat right here and now."

"Oh, them!" She laughed and drawed a deep sigh, like she was relieved. "Why, they won't have anything to do with us—after all, they're just great big grown-up boys, just playing around. Why on earth didn't you say that in the first place?"

"Nope," Joe said; "them great big grown-up boys is going to play around somewheres where I ain't going to be near. All I aimed to marry was one girl——"

"But, Joe," Kitty broke in, "they're going away! They got jobs with the circus. They wouldn't be with us. You just

happen to catch 'em in, that's all. Sister and the boys, they all got to get started right away. They're joining up with their shows almost any day now!"

"You mean, they'll be somewheres on the road?" he asked, still suspicious.

"Sure!" the old girl said. "Them kids—why, them kids are leaving to-morrow, if not the next day!"

"Is this on the level?" Joe asked Kitty.

"Mamma wouldn't lie to you, Joe," she said.

"You mean," he insisted, "it'll be just me and you, just us and nobody else in our home?"

She didn't answer. The old lady herself didn't say anything, but Joe said at that minute he seen her hard old face kind of soften up, and her eyes looked tired and sad. She looked at Kitty a long time and then out the window. Then she sighed again—a long sigh, like an old person that's giving in at last.

"Yes, Joe," she said in a low voice. "I'll find somewheres to live by myself"—and turning slowly, she walked down the hall and into her own room.

Joe just stood there. He never thought he could feel the way he did then, watching that big old lady go slowly down the hall and turn in that door. He looked back, and there was tears in Kitty's eyes. She came to him, using a little handkerchief, and he taken her in his arms. Well, sir, Joe said he felt like a brute.

Without meaning anything at all, he unloosed his self and followed mamma. At the door to her room he stopped. She was setting on the bed looking at a photograph, and while he looked, a tear dropped. He stepped in, moved closer, and looked down at the photograph. Joe said it was a picture of the wildest-looking lyrun he ever seen.

"Rex," she said, looking up—"my Rex."

"Lyrun," Joe said.

"The sweetest lyrun that ever lived," she whispered. "Rex had a heart as big as all outdoors, Joe. Why, he wasn't no more harm than a great big dog. Playful and good-humored, Joe, and he was one that loved me true. If they'd have let him out the cage he'd followed me all around like a great big dog. And I was the only one he'd let handle him. Once a guy poked him and Rex broke his onion with one swipe of the paw—that showed how that lyrun loved me."

Joe set down. "Mighty nice-looking lyrun," he said.

"Well, Rex wasn't so much for looks. He got kind of ratty-looking in his later years—this was taken when he was in his prime, you might say—but for looks you got to hand it to Leo." She pulled out a drawer in a table and hauled out another photograph. "Just cast a glance at that, if you want to see a good-looking lyrun." She messed around in the drawer and got another one. "And Rajah wasn't no bad-looking cat, if it comes to that!"

Joe looked at them without saying one way or the other, because they just looked like lyruns to him, and nothing to pick between them.

Then he handed the pictures back and she laid them out in her lap and looked at them. They must have sat there five minutes, Joe said, not saying a word, her looking at them lyruns and wiping the tears out her eyes and Joe just sitting.

"They're all I got," she said then, "and they ain't anything but memories. They're dead, passed on, and when they died I reckon the last thing I could depend on died too. I'm just a old woman now, and my lyruns are all gone—all gone."

Joe said he got to thinking about it, and the noise in the house had died down, and the more he got to thinking about it, the more he felt like a low-down brute, and he got to weeping a little his self, the way she described them lyruns, and the two of them just set there mingling their tears, as you might say.

Then Kitty tiptoed in, almost without they hearing her, and sat down on the floor at Joe's feet and laid her head on his knees, and when Joe reached over and patted her on the cheek, it was damp too. Joe said he just couldn't stand it.

"Mother," he said, and the old girl and Kitty looked up at him, their eyes lighting up. "Mother," he said, "that's all right. I reckon me and Kitty'll be able to put you up. Not all that horde of people out there, of course, but us, just the three of us, we'll fix us up a nice quiet little home in Queens. That's all we want, mother—just a nice quiet little home without any acrobats in it."

Kitty got up on her knees and taken his head in her arms, and Joe said at that minute he was one of the happiest guys that ever was. Two days later they found just the swellest little place you ever seen, out in Queens, and they was united in the holy bonds of matrimony.

The guy stopped.

"Well," I said, "that was a pretty narrow squeak for him. For a minute or so you had me worried there; I thought he was going to lose her or get into some kind of mix-up. It's a good thing he had the nerve to put his foot down flat and tell 'em."

"Yes," he said, "Joe was firm about it. Joe just told 'em before the wedding that he wasn't aiming to stand for anything like what they'd been used to. He spoke right out."

"What I can't understand," I said, "is what's he moping for, then. It looks like to me he's sitting on the top of the world. What's he look so sad about?"

"Well," the guy said, "a couple of months later Joe got a raise—another raise—because he was married and settled down and everything and——"

He stopped, because at that minute there was a lot of noise at the door. We looked over and what looked like an enormous crowd of people, all shouting and talking at once, were pushing in, shoving people aside and annoying everybody generally. Everybody in the joint had lifted their heads and were watching.

"Har-r-rup-p-p!"

There was no mistaking the short, large woman that headed this contingent of customers; she was disposing of waiters and managers and cashiers as though they were just so many lions. At her heels came a lovely girl, four athletic-looking guys, two with mustaches, a big full-chested baby with blond hair, and three children ranging from about three to five.

"Har-r-rup-p-p!" roared the old girl. "Yonder he is! Come on, folks!"

They bore down on our table, sweeping chairs and customers out of their path as they came, and the next minute we were apparently surrounded, engulfed in a storm of shouts and har-rup-p-ps and yelps and orders, and I looked at Joe. He hadn't lifted his head. His shoulders had sagged a little more, though, and he flinched under the impact of the uproar as though it were a barrage of bricks.

"Papa! Papa!" the kids shouted. "We seen the circus! We seen the lyruns and elephants and clowns!"

"The lyruns was lousy!" the old girl told him. "Never in my life have I seen such lousy lyruns. I wouldn't have had a one of them in my act. I'd a been ashamed to walk out in

front of people with the kind of cats they got this year in that show—lyrun work has gone back in the past ten years. They ain't got the lyruns they had in my day."

"Them tumblers was lousy, I thought," said one of the athletic guys. "When you think we can't get work and they take tumbling acts like that——"

"They had one lyrun there," the old girl said, "that I wouldn't use for a doormat. It was old and frayed and mangy, and that fellow that was handling them, why, he looked like he was afraid of that cat. I never seen such a lousy act——"

"The trombone work——"

"Why, when I had them seven lyruns they wasn't a one of them that I couldn't handle with my bare mitts—— Rex!"

I leaped. I wouldn't have been a bit surprised if she had brought one of her lions with her. But I was mistaken. Her yell had been directed at one of the little boys.

"Rex," she said, "go get Leo and Rajah. They're climbing on a gentleman's lap."

The lad ran after his brothers.

The lovely girl spoke for the first time. "Come Joe," she said, "let's all go home. Everybody's had a marvelous evening. We had swell seats. But it's getting late, and mamma and the boys are sleepy. Let's all go home now."

Joe rose wearily and got his hat off the stand. The others all got up, most of them talking at once, and they moved toward the door in a broad phalanx, in the middle of which was this sad-looking little man, shoulders drooping, silent, broken.

The guy paused for a minute. "You see?" he said.

"I see," I admitted. "I got you."

THE LITTLE WIFE

BY WILLIAM MARCH

FROM *The Midland*

WILLIAM MARCH

comes from Mobile, Alabama. He is a young lawyer who served through the war in the Marine Corps and is now connected with a large New York corporation. In the evenings and on week-ends he writes. Within three years he has written several stories that demand attention.

JOE HINCKLEY selected a seat on the shady side of the train and carefully stowed away his traveling bag and his heavy, black catalogue case. It was unusually hot for early June. Outside, the heat waves shimmered and danced above the hot slag roadbed, and the muddy river that ran by the station was low between its red banks. "If it's as hot as this in June, it sure will be awful in August," he thought. He looked at his watch: two twenty-eight—the train was five minutes late in getting out. If he had known the two twenty-three was going to be late he might have had time to pack his sample trunk and get it to the station, but he couldn't have anticipated that, of course. He had had so little time after getting that telegram from Mrs. Thompkins—barely time to pack his bag and check out of the hotel. Joe loosened his belt and swabbed his neck with a limp handkerchief. "It don't matter so much about the trunk," he thought. "One of the boys at the hotel can express it to me, or I can pick it up on my way back."

Joe noticed that one end of his catalogue case protruded slightly. With his foot he shoved it farther under the seat. It was a battered black case, made strongly to withstand constant traveling and reinforced at its corners with heavy copper cleats. One of the handles had been broken and mended with newer leather. On the front of the case there had once been stamped in gilt the firm name of "Boykin & Rosen, Wholesale Hardware, Chattanooga, Tenn.," but time had long since worn away the gold lettering.

The telegram had upset Joe: it had come so suddenly, so unexpectedly. He felt vaguely that somebody was playing a joke on him. He felt confused and helpless. It was difficult to believe that Bessie was so desperately sick. He sat for a time staring at his finger nails. Suddenly he remembered an appointment for four o'clock with the buyer for Snowdoun and Sims, and he rose quickly from his seat with some vague idea of telephoning or sending a message to explain his absence. Then he realized that the train was in motion. "I'll

write him a letter when I get to Mobile," said Joe to himself; "he'll understand all right when I explain the circumstances. He won't blame me for breaking that date when I tell him about my wife being so sick." Joe sat down heavily in his seat and again looked at his hands.

Ahead of him two young girls were leaning out of the window and waving to their friends. Their eyes were shining and their cheeks were flushed and they were laughing with excitement at the prospect of going away.

Across the aisle sat a gaunt farm-woman. Her red-veined eyes protruded. Her neck was swollen with a goitre. In her arms she held a bouquet of red crêpe-myrtle, which was already wilting in the heat. Beside her she had placed her straw suitcase and several bulky paper-wrapped parcels. She gazed steadily out of the window as if afraid that someone would catch her eye and try to talk to her.

It was very hot in the coach. The small electric fan at the end of the car droned and wheezed sleepily but succeeded only in stirring up the hot air.

Joe took from his pocket the telegram that he had received from his mother-in-law and read it again:

J. G. Hinckley, American Hotel, Montgomery, Ala. Come home at once. Doctor says Bessie not expected live through day. Will wire again if necessary. It was a boy. Mother.

Joe's hands clenched suddenly and then relaxed. It had all happened so suddenly; he couldn't quite get it through his head, even yet. He had taken a buyer to lunch that day and they had laughed and talked and told each other stories. Then at two o'clock he had gone back to the hotel to freshen up and the clerk had reached into his box and taken out the key to his room and the telegram. The telegram had been waiting for him for two hours, the clerk said. Joe read it through twice and then looked at the address to make sure that the message was really for him. He hadn't understood: Bessie was getting along so nicely—she had had no trouble at all—and the baby was not expected for a month. He had arranged his itinerary so that he would be with her when the baby was born. They had gone over all that and had arranged everything. And now everything was upset. . . . Then he thought: "I was out talking and laughing with that

buyer and the telegram was waiting here all the time." That thought hurt him. He stood repeating stupidly: "I was out laughing and telling smutty stories and that telegram was here all the time."

Joe leaned his head against the red plush of the seat. He felt numb and very tired. At first the signature "Mother" had puzzled him. He couldn't understand what his mother would be doing in Mobile with Bessie; then he realized that it was Bessie's mother who had sent the telegram. He had never thought of Bessie's mother by any name except Mrs. Thompkins.

When he had married Bessie her mother had come to live with them as a matter of course. He was rather glad of that arrangement: he was really fond of the old lady in an impersonal sort of way. Then, too, it was pleasant for Bessie to have someone with her while he was on the road. His work made it impossible for him to get home oftener than every other week end; and many times it was difficult for him to get home that often, but he had always managed to make it, one way or another. He couldn't disappoint Bessie, no matter what happened. Their year of married life had been the happiest that he had ever known. And Bessie had been happy too. . . . Suddenly he had a clear picture of her lying on their bed, her face white with suffering, and a quick panic gripped his heart. To reassure himself he whispered: "Those damned doctors don't know everything. She'll be all right. Mrs. Thompkins was just excited and frightened. Everything's going to be all right!"

Ahead of him a white-haired old gentleman opened his bag and took out a traveling cap. He had some difficulty in fastening the catch while holding his straw hat in his hand; but his wife, sitting with him, took the bag and fastened it at once. Then she took his hat and held it on her lap. The wife was reading a magazine. She did not look up from the magazine when she fastened the bag.

Down the aisle came the Negro porter. He had a telegram in his hand. When he reached the center of the coach he stopped and called out: "Telegram for Mr. J. G. Hinckley!" Joe let him call the name three times before he claimed the message. The porter explained that the telegram had been delivered to the train by a messenger from the American

Hotel just as the train was getting under way. Joe gave the porter twenty-five cents for a tip and went back to his seat.

The country woman looked up for an instant and then turned her eyes away. The young girls giggled and whispered and looked boldly at Joe; and the old gentleman, after settling his cap firmly on his head, took a cigar from his case and went to the smoking-room.

Joe's throat felt tight, and he noticed that his hands were shaking. He wanted to put his head on the windowsill, but he was afraid that people would think him sick and try to talk to him. He placed the unopened telegram on the seat beside him and stared at it for a long time. Then he re-read the first telegram very slowly. "It must be from Mrs. Thompkins, all right," he thought; "she said she'd wire again if—" Then he thought: "It may not be from Mrs. Thompkins at all; it may be from somebody else; it may be from Boykin and Rosen about that cancellation in Meridian. That's who it's from: it's from the House; it's not from Mrs. Thompkins at all!" He looked up quickly and saw that the two young girls had turned around and were watching him, making laughing remarks to each other behind their hands.

He arose from his seat feeling weak and slightly nauseated, the unopened telegram in his hand. He passed through several coaches until he reached the end of the train, and went out on the rear vestibule. He had a sudden wish to jump from the end of the train and run off into the woods, but a brakeman was there tinkering with a red lantern and Joe realized that such an act would look very strange. When the brakeman looked up and saw Joe's face, he put down his lantern and asked: "Are you feeling all right, mister?" Joe said, "Yes, I'm feeling all right; but it's a little hot, though." Finally the brakeman finished his job and left, and Joe was very glad of that. He wanted to be alone. He didn't want anybody around him.

The rails clicked rhythmically and the wilted countryside flew past. A little Negro girl . . . in a patched pink dress . . . ran down to the track . . . and waved her hand. A lame old country man . . . ploughing in his stumpy field . . . pulled up his lazy mule . . . to stare at the passing train. The rails clattered and clicked and the train flew over the hot slag roadbed. "There's no need of going so fast," thought Joe, "we've got

all the time in the world." He felt sick. In the polished metal of the car he caught a distorted glimpse of his face. It was white and terrified. He thought: "No wonder that brakeman asked me how I was feeling." Then he thought: "Do I look so bad that people can tell it?" That worried him. He didn't want people to notice him or to talk to him. There was nothing that anybody could say, after all.

He kept turning the telegram over in his hand, thinking: "I've got to open it now; I've got to open it and read it." Finally he said aloud: "It's not true! I don't believe it!" He repeated these words a number of times and then he said: "It's from the House about that cancellation in Meridian—it isn't from Mrs. Thompkins at all." Then he tore the unopened telegram into tiny bits and threw the pieces from the end of the train. A wind fluttered and shimmered the yellow fragments before they settled down lightly on the hard hot roadbed. He thought: "They look like a cloud of yellow butterflies dancing and settling that way." Immediately he felt better. He drew back his shoulders and sucked in lungfuls of the country air. "Everything's all right!" he said. "I'm going home to see the little wife and everything's all right!" He laughed happily. He felt like a man who has just escaped some terrible calamity. When he could no longer see the scraps of paper on the track he went back to his seat humming a tune. He felt very gay and immensely relieved.

Joe reached his seat just as the conductor came through the train. He nodded pleasantly as he gave up his ticket.

"Don't let nobody talk you out of a free ride," he said.

"No chance of that, Cap'," said the conductor.

Joe laughed with ringing heartiness and the conductor looked at him in surprise. Then he laughed a little himself. "You sure are in a good humor, considering how hot it is," he said.

"And why shouldn't I be in a good humor?" asked Joe. "I'm going home to see the little wife." Then he whispered, as if it were a great secret, "It's a boy!"

"That's fine; that's simply fine!" said the conductor. He put his papers and his tickets on the seat and shook Joe's hand heartily. Joe blushed and laughed again. Then, as the conductor moved off, he nudged Joe's ribs and said: "Give my regards to the madam."

"I sure will," said Joe happily.

Joe was sorry that the conductor couldn't stay longer. He felt an imperative need of talking to someone. He felt that he must talk about Bessie to someone. He looked around the car to see if there was anyone whom he knew. The two young girls smiled at him. Joe understood perfectly; they were just two nice kids going on a trip. Either one, alone, would never think of smiling at a strange man, but being together changed things entirely. That made it an exciting adventure—something to be laughed over and discussed later with their friends. Joe decided that he would go over and talk to them. He walked over casually and seated himself.

"Where are you girls going?" he asked.

"Don't you think that you have a great deal of nerve?" asked the black-eyed girl.

"Sure I have. I wouldn't be the best hardware salesman on the road if I didn't have lots of nerve," said Joe pleasantly.

Both of the girls laughed at that and Joe knew that everything was all right. He decided that the blue-eyed girl was the prettier of the two but the black-eyed girl had more snap.

"We're getting off at Flomaton," said the blue-eyed girl.

"We've been in school in Montgomery," said the black-eyed girl.

"We're going home for the summer vacation."

"And we want the cockeyed world to know we're glad of it!"

Joe looked at them gravely. "Don't make a mistake, young ladies; get all the education you can—you'll regret it later on if you don't."

Both the girls started laughing. They put their arms around each other and laughed until tears came into their eyes. Joe laughed too, although he wondered what the joke was. After awhile the girls stopped laughing, but a sudden giggle from the blue-eyed girl set them off again, worse than before.

"This is awfully silly!" said the black-eyed girl.

"Please don't think us rude," gasped the blue-eyed girl.

"What's the joke?" asked Joe, who was really laughing as much as either of the girls.

"You sounded so—so—" explained the blue-eyed girl.

"So damned *fatherly!*" finished the black-eyed girl.

Then they went off into another whirlwind of mirth, laughing and hugging each other. The old lady across the aisle put down her magazine and started laughing too, but the woman with the goitre held her bouquet of crêpe-myrtle rigidly and stared out of the window.

Joe waited until the girls had exhausted themselves. Finally they wiped their eyes and opened their vanity cases to look at themselves in their mirrors and to repowder their noses. Then he said:

"Well, I guess I ought to sound fatherly: I just got a telegram saying that I was a proud parent."

That interested the young girls and they crowded him with questions; they wanted to know all about it. Joe felt very happy. As he started to talk he noticed that the old lady had been listening and that she had moved over in her seat in order to hear better. Joe felt friendly toward everybody. "Won't you come over and join us?" he asked.

"Yes, indeed," said the nice old lady, and Joe moved over and made a place for her.

"Now tell us all about it!" demanded the blue-eyed girl.

"You must be very happy," said the nice old lady.

"I sure am happy," said Joe. Then he added: "There's not a whole lot to tell except that I got a telegram from Mrs. Thompkins—Mrs. Thompkins is my mother-in-law—saying that Bessie had given birth to a fine boy and that both of them were doing splendidly; the doctor said that he'd never seen anybody so well before, but of course my wife wanted me to be with her, and so I just dropped everything and here I am. You see Bessie and I have only been married for a year. We've been very happy. The only bad thing is that I don't get home very often; but it wouldn't do to have everything perfect in the world, would it? She sure is the finest little wife a man ever had. She don't complain at all about my being away so much. But some day we hope to have things different."

"There isn't anything nicer than a baby," said the blue-eyed girl.

"What are you going to name him?" asked the nice old lady.

"Well, Bessie wants to name him for me, but I can't see much sense in that. My first name's Joe and I think that's a little common, don't you? But I'll leave the naming part up to Bessie. She can name him anything she wants to. She sure has been a fine little wife to me."

Then Joe started talking rapidly. He told in detail of the first time he had met Bessie: it had been in the home of Jack Barnes, one of the boys whom he had met on the road, and he had been invited over for dinner and a little stud poker later. Mrs. Barnes didn't play poker, so Bessie, who lived across the street, had been invited over to keep Mrs. Barnes company while the men played. He had liked Bessie at once, and the boys had kidded him about not keeping his mind on the game. He had never told anybody this before, but when the boys started kidding him he made up his mind not to look at Bessie again, as he didn't want her to think that he was fresh; but he couldn't stop looking at her, and every time he caught her eye she would smile in a sweet, friendly sort of way. Finally everybody noticed it and they started joking Bessie too, but she hadn't minded at all. He had lost fourteen dollars and fifty cents that night, but he had met Bessie. You couldn't call Bessie exactly beautiful but she was sweet and nice. Bessie was the sort of girl that any man would want to marry.

He told of their courtship. He quoted whole paragraphs from letters that she had written, to prove a particular point which he had brought up. Bessie hadn't liked him especially, not right at first, at any rate; of course she had liked him as a friend from the first but not in any serious way. There were one or two other fellows hanging around, too. Bessie had a great deal of attention; she could have gone out every night with a different man if she had wanted to. Being on the road all the time had been pretty much of a disadvantage. He didn't have an opportunity to see her often. Or maybe that was an advantage—anyway, he wrote her every day. Then, finally, they had become engaged. She hadn't even let him kiss her until then. He knew from the first that she would make a wonderful little wife, but he was still puzzled why a girl as superior as Bessie would want to marry him.

He talked on and on, rapidly—feverishly. He told how he had once determined not to get married at all, but that was

before he had met Bessie. She had changed all that . . . Two hours passed before he knew it. His audience was getting bored, but Joe didn't realize it.

Finally the old gentleman with the cap came back from the smoking room; and his wife, glad of a chance to get away, made her excuses and went over to sit with him. Joe smiled and nodded, but paused only a moment in his story. He was in the midst of a long description of Mrs. Thompkins. Mrs. Thompkins wasn't at all like the comic-supplement mother-in-law. Quite the contrary. He didn't see how he and Bessie would get along without her. To show you the sort of woman she really was, she always took his side in any dispute—not that he and Bessie ever quarreled! Oh, no! But occasionally they had little friendly discussions, like all other married couples, and Mrs. Thompkins always took his side of the argument. That was unusual, wasn't it? Joe talked and talked and talked, totally unconscious of the passing of time.

Finally the train reached Flomaton, and the porter came to help the girls off with their bags. They were very glad to get away. They were getting a little nervous. There was something about Joe they couldn't understand. At first they had thought him just jolly and high-spirited, but after a time they came to the conclusion that he must be a little drunk or, possibly, slightly demented. For the past hour they had been nudging each other significantly.

Joe helped them off the train and onto the station platform. Just as the train pulled out, the black-eyed girl waved her hand and said: "Give my love to Bessie and the son and heir," and the blue-eyed girl said: "Be sure and kiss the baby for me."

"I sure will," said Joe.

After the train had passed the girls looked at each other for a moment. Then they started laughing. Finally the black-eyed girl said: "Well, Bessie certainly has him roped and tied." The blue-eyed girl said: "Did you ever see anything like that in your life before?"

Joe went back to the coach. "Just a couple of nice kids," he thought to himself. He looked at his watch. It was five twenty-five. He was surprised. The time had passed very quickly. "It won't be long now before I'm in Mobile," he thought.

He went back to his seat, but he was restless. He decided that he would have a cigarette. He found three men in the smoker. One of them was an old man with a tuft of gray whiskers. His face was yellow and sunken, and blue veins stood out on his hands. He was chewing tobacco gravely and spitting into the brass cuspidor. The second man was large and flabby. When he laughed, his eyes disappeared entirely and his fat belly shook. His finger nails were swollen and his under lip hung down in a petulant droop. The third man was dark and nervous-looking. He had on his little finger a ring with a diamond much too large.

They were telling jokes and laughing when Joe came in. Joe wanted to talk to them about Bessie, but he couldn't bring her name up in such an atmosphere. Suddenly he thought: "I was laughing and telling smutty stories with that buyer in Montgomery, and the telegram was there all the time." His face contracted with pain. He crushed the thought from his mind. Quickly he threw away his cigarette and went back to his seat.

A bright-skinned waiter came through the train announcing the first call to dinner. At first Joe thought that he would have his dinner on the train, as that would break the monotony of the trip and help pass the time; but immediately he remembered that Mrs. Thompkins would have dinner for him at home—a specially prepared dinner with all of the things that he liked. "I'll wait till I get home," thought Joe. "I wouldn't disappoint Mrs. Thompkins and the little wife for the world after they went to all that trouble for me."

Again he felt that curious, compulsive need of talking about Bessie to someone. He had a feeling that as long as he talked about her, she would remain safe. He saw the old lady and her husband in their seat eating a lunch which they had brought with them and he decided to go over and talk with them. "Can I come over and talk to you folks?" asked Joe.

"Certainly, sir," said the old gentleman with the cap. Then, in order to make conversation he said: "My wife has been telling me that you are going home to see your new son."

"That's right," said Joe, "that's right." He started talking rapidly, hardly pausing for breath. The old lady looked at her husband reproachfully. "Now see what you started!" her glance seemed to say.

Joe talked of his wedding. It had been very quiet: Bessie was the sort of girl who didn't go in for a lot of show. There had been present only a few members of the family and one or two close friends. George Orcutt, who traveled with a line of rugs out of New York, had been his best man. Bessie was afraid that someone would try to play a joke on them: something like tying tin cans to the automobile that was to take them to the station, or marking their baggage with chalk. But everything had gone off smoothly. The Barneses had been at the wedding, of course: he had met Bessie in their home and they were such close neighbors that they couldn't overlook them; but almost nobody else, outside the family, was there.

Then he told of the honeymoon they had spent in New Orleans—all the places they had visited there and just what Bessie had thought and said about each one. He talked on and on and on. He told of the first weeks of their married life and how happy they were. He told what a splendid cook Bessie was and what an excellent housekeeper, how much she had loved the home he had bought for her, and her delight when she knew that she was going to have a baby.

The old gentleman was staring at Joe in a puzzled manner. He was wondering if he hadn't better call the conductor, as it was his private opinion that Joe had a shot of cocaine in him. The old lady had folded her hands like a martyr. She continued to look at her husband with an I-told-you-so expression.

Joe had lost all idea of time. He talked on and on—rapidly, excitedly. He had gotten as far as Bessie's plans for the child's education when the porter touched him on the arm and told him that they were pulling into the station at Mobile. He came to himself with a start and looked at his watch: seven thirty-five! He didn't believe it possible that two hours had passed so quickly.

"It sure has been a pleasure talking to you folks," said Joe.

"Oh, that's all right," said the man with the cap.

Joe gave the porter a tip and stepped off the train jauntily. As he turned to pick up his bag, he saw that the woman with the goitre was staring at him. He walked over to the window that framed her gaunt face. "Good-bye, lady; I hope you have a nice trip." The woman answered: "The

doctors said it wasn't no use operating on me: I waited too late." "Well, that's fine!—That sure is fine!" said Joe. He laughed gaily and waved his hand. Then he picked up his bag and his catalogue case and followed the people through the gate. The woman with the goitre stared at him until he was out of sight.

On the other side of the iron fence Joe saw Mrs. Thompkins. She was dressed all in black and she wore a black veil. Joe went over to her briskly, and Mrs. Thompkins put her arms around him and kissed him twice. "Poor Joe!" she said. Then she looked at his smiling, excited face with amazement. Joe noticed that her eyes were red and swollen.

"Didn't you get my telegram?" she asked. Joe wrinkled his brow in an effort to remember. Finally he said: "Oh, yes, I got it at the hotel."

"Did you get my second telegram?" insisted Mrs. Thompkins.

She looked steadily into Joe's eyes. A feeling of terror swept over him. He knew that he could no longer lie to himself. He could no longer keep Bessie alive by talking about her. His face was suddenly twisted with pain and his jaw trembled like a child's. He leaned against the iron fence for support, and Mrs. Thompkins held his hand and said: "You can't give in. You got to be a man; you can't give in like that, Joe!"

Finally he said: "I didn't read your telegram. I didn't want to know that she was dead. I wanted to keep her alive a little longer." He sat down suddenly on an empty baggage truck and hid his face in his hands. He sat there for a long time while Mrs. Thompkins stood guard over him, her black veil trailing across his shoulder. Finally he asked: "What time did Bessie die?" His voice was tight and hard. It seemed to come from behind his teeth. Mrs. Thompkins answered: "She died at three minutes past two."

A man in a dirty uniform came up. "I'm sorry, mister, but you'll have to move. We got to use that truck."

Joe picked up his catalogue case and his bag and followed Mrs. Thompkins out of the station.

ENCARNACIÓN

BY ALICIA O'REARDON OVERBECK

FROM *Harper's*

ALICIA O'REARDON OVERBECK

the wife of a mining engineer, makes her home in that section of Bolivia which lies under a jutting range of the Andes. From this natural environment and its characters she has derived the materials for her studies of those people whose speech is Spanish, but from whom somewhat of the Old World gaiety has been taken.

SEÑORA." The voice was gentle, soft, purring, with none of the dry nasal tones of Bolivia. I was leaning on the gate of our little patio, gossiping with Min, my comrade of many camps, and I turned quickly to face the speaker. A girl stood several steps above me, on the gravel path that ran around my small garden. Against the faint ash rose of the adobe wall she was a thing of loveliness and color in her wide mauve *pollera*, embroidered salmon-pink shawl, high gray kid boots, and tall, glistening white Chola hat.

"Señora," she repeated—and a shy smile revealed white, childish teeth and a dimple in her left cheek—"would you have need of a servant?"

As it happened, I had need, and very pressing need, of a servant at that precise moment, but somehow the charming, glowing figure before me seemed far removed from the realms of toil. Her skin was luminous ivory, with a hint of pink on the cheekbones, her round eyes were golden-brown velvet, her weak little mouth was damp and red, and her sepia hair, plaited into the regulation Chola *trenzas*, curled at the ends. There was nothing of the country about her save her clothes, and even these were so fresh and smart that there was a certain comic-opera quality about them.

"What is your name?" I asked, and I too found myself smiling.

"Encarnación, Señora," she answered, "and I am of Araca. I have been living with my sister there—her husband is chauffeur for the Company. I should greatly like to work for you, Señora."

I turned to Min, and found her eyeing the girl from head to toe, tight disapproval written in every line of her face.

"What do you think?" I asked.

"Think! I don't think. I know. Take her and you take trouble. She's a darned sight too pretty for a camp servant. Wait until the boys set eyes on her. And she's not a native, either. She's half Gringo. Ask her."

The question to an outsider might seem rather delicate, but to a Bolivian a matter of natural or legitimate birth is a mere trifle; so I asked briskly:

"Are you a *Nacionale?*"

"*Sí, Señora, sí.*" She nodded her head eagerly. Then her eye caught Min's, and she hesitated. "But my papa, he was a German."

"There," cried Min triumphantly. "What did I tell you? That accounts for her light skin and eyes and hair. You know these half-breeds."

"She's sort of blossomy, isn't she? And so babyish! If someone doesn't take her in and give her a chance, what will become of her?"

"Don't fret, it'll become of her anyway. Why court trouble?"

Encarnación's eyes roved from one to the other of us as we talked her over in English and inspected her with much the same interest we might give to a chicken or a pig about to be purchased.

"How old are you, Encarnación?" I asked.

"I have thirteen years, Señora," she answered.

Thirteen years! According to our standards a little girl, but according to the standards of her people a woman grown. In the little pueblo of Rosario down the valley were the *chicheriàs*, where girls even younger than this one stood in the doorways and smiled enticingly. Just across the river was an awful, toothless old woman who collected girls and rented them out rather profitably. In the native camp itself were mothers who boldly sold their girls to the highest bidder. I knew even as I spoke that I could not spare this lovely Encarnación her ultimate fate, but she was such a baby to face it now.

"I think I'll give her a trial, Min," I said, and I felt quite as much embarrassed as if I had been caught in a petty theft. Min had her points, and we had weathered many a storm together; but at times her obvious rightness was a little overpowering.

"Well, you'll regret it. You see if you don't. She won't want to work. Look at those clothes and her smooth hands. Furthermore, it won't be a week before you have the boys throwing rocks on your roof and prowling around your house

at all hours of the night, and you'll probably have to go after them with a gun, just as I did when that beast of a Parades came after my Felicidad. I—"

"Oh, well," I said hurriedly, "no harm trying it out, and at least she will be ornamental."

At the moment I felt that I simply could not listen again to the worn anecdote of the one known assault on the virtue of Min's Felicidad. Felicidad was quite the most hopeless of Bolivia's daughters—pock-marked, squint-eyed, bow-legged. No wonder she was a paragon of propriety and respectability!

"Ornamental!" Min rather snorted. "Well, I've warned you. She won't work—she's much too pretty for that—and she'll cause trouble. You see. I must run along now, and see what Felicidad is doing. *Hasta la vista!*"

Both Encarnación and I were visibly relieved at Min's departure. She heaved a deep sigh, and the questioning smile returned to her face.

"I think I'll try you out," I said. "What wages do you get?"

"What would it please you to give, Señora?"

"Twenty-five Bolivianos a month at first. Then, if you work hard, we'll see."

Apparently the sum, the equivalent of about nine dollars gold, was entirely satisfactory, for she beamed and cried: "*Bien, Señora, muy bien.*"

No use asking her what she could do. The truth was not even expected of her kind, and if I had asked her, she would have claimed all the domestic accomplishments.

"Come on," I said, "and I'll show you your room."

The room was nothing more than a *calamina* shed hung to the side of our tent house. One had to bend nearly double to enter, and there was no window. A small camp bed, a rickety washstand with a tin bowl and pitcher, a shattered table, and a chair were the furniture. The room had a board floor instead of the customary one of dirt, a bed instead of a bundle of rags in the corner, and a door that would lock. I noticed Encarnación looking at the door with interest.

"*Es bonita, Señora,*" she breathed. "*Muy bonita! Linda!*"

Almost too bad that anyone should consider such a hole as *bonita*—even *muy bonita*—and *linda*, but this was no time to haggle over æsthetics.

"Where are your things?" I asked.

She pointed out the door to a large bundle wrapped in a sheet. Beside it sat a small, white woolly dog. Unlike most native dogs, he was immaculately clean, and from under his fluffy white bang his black eyes twinkled and his wet little black nose twitched eagerly.

"Is that your dog?"

"*Sí, Señora.*" Encarnación's hands clasped and unclasped nervously, and her eyes were imploring. "He is most loving and intelligent and peaceful."

"You can't keep him in camp," I said sternly, but at the same time carefully avoiding the earnest gaze of the small dog. "There are other dogs, and he might destroy the gardens."

"But, Señora, he is so *muy caballero*, is my little dog. And his name is Cazador."

Cazador (the hunter), at the mention of his name, threw himself up on his small rump, and lifted his paw in a smart military salute. I looked from the girl to the dog. Both were so singularly alike—so clean, so young, so almost elegantly spectacular. As Cazador caught my eye his little red tongue lolled out of the side of his mouth, and he distinctly smiled.

"Well," I conceded weakly, "I suppose you'll have to keep him. But he must not dig in the garden, and he must never enter the sala."

"*Nunca, Señora. Nunca, nunca, nunca,*" agreed Encarnación vehemently.

"Very well," I said, and I shook Cazador's paw and urged him to return to a more normal and easy position. "Take your things into your room, and when you get straightened out, come into the house quickly."

Min was wrong on one point. Encarnación could and would work. She could polish a floor until it glittered; she could make a bed—smooth and straight and taut; she could scrub and order our shabby bathroom to the point of trimness; she could arrange flowers and pillows and curtains until our dowdy living room came to life and glowed. She was gentle, too, and affectionate; and she always seemed to feel that between us was a bond of real understanding. She never talked much—she was curiously inarticulate amongst a talkative people—and our conversations were confined to inquiries as to my health and her sweet, singing "Señora." But she had my

personal appearance enormously at heart, and appeared to regret my somewhat careless habits. If I were going to a party, she would powder the back of my neck so that not the least speck showed on the edges of my hair; she would insist on a triangle of rouge on each cheek; she would adjust to the last fold the dress which she had first carefully pressed. And she developed a perfect passion for running behind me and straightening the seams of my stockings, which somehow were always a little askew.

As for Cazador, he quickly established himself in the heart of the household. The first morning he was in residence, he appeared with my breakfast tray, saluted politely, and helped me finish my toast. He was, as Encarnación had guaranteed, *muy caballero*, and his attitude toward the garden and my cat Chevalita was the essence of discretion. He quite naturally spent the best part of his days on a small rug in front of the stove in the sala. Relations between Cazador and me were always a little formal—we were acquaintances rather than friends—and although he would eat breakfast with me and invariably treat me with perfect courtesy, he would never go walking with me or take me into his full confidence. His *patrona* owned his heart entire.

On the other point I soon found that Min was entirely right. The boys—both Gringo and native—quickly discovered Encarnación. The first Saturday night after her arrival a crowd of them came down from the mine to our base camp and, as usual, flocked into our tent for a cocktail and the gossip of the week. Among them was Jorge Ibañez, the tall, greenly pallid native accountant, who had been to the States, who spoke almost perfect English, and who was the bane of my existence. He affected Gringo ways and dress, he craved Gringo society, and wrecked our choicest gatherings by his unsolicited presence; he professed for his own people a laughing, scornful contempt.

Encarnación brought the tray of cocktails into the sitting room. Without her hat and shawl she was more than ever entrancing. Her soft hair curled over her low forehead, long gold earrings swung in her little pink ears, and her sloping shoulders and small waist showed to perfection in her trig, tight-fitting basque. As she entered the room there was a hush. Every man there registered his own particular form of

interest. Ibañez's thick, lead-colored lips fell slightly open, and the heavy lids of his eyes drooped. The young mine superintendent whistled between his teeth.

"Gee," he said, "look who's here. Where did you find it, Alicia?"

Min, sitting in the corner, cast me a triumphant smile, which quite maddened me; and I turned on my guests with asperity.

"*Cuidado, Caballeros,*" I said crisply. "*Cuidado.* This kid belongs here. She's only thirteen—do you understand, only thirteen. So remember Min and her gun, and *cuidado!*"

"You shouldn't tempt us, 'Licia," snickered the mine superintendent.

But our own boys were a decent lot. Sometimes they rather ran amuck, and their jokes were apt to be a bit lurid; but on the whole they were pretty straight. Ibañez it was who troubled me—Ibañez with his slow, heavy stare and his loose, twitching lips. He caught my eye and came across the room to light my cigarette.

"Your new maid, Señora," he said, "she is charming—no?"

"Yes, charming, Don Jorge," I answered in the formal voice I reserved for intruders. "Charming—and mine."

His insolent gaze shifted quickly from me back to Encarnación. As she passed her tray she bestowed on each man her moist, sweet smile, showing little pointed teeth, and the men smiled back in frank admiration. I could gaily have killed them. And Min prodded me in the ribs and said:

"Now, you see what I told you?"

I was awakened that night by the unmistakable sound of pebbles on the tin roof of Encarnación's room. I sat up quickly and called:

"Encarnación, Encarnación! *Qué la pasa?*"

Without waiting for an answer, I leaped from my bed to the window, just in time to see a man's figure flash around the corner of the tent. There was a crash, and I knew that the intruder must have tripped over my potted plants, and was probably now crouching in the shadow of the wall. As I peered into the murky blackness, the moon suddenly freed itself of a bank of cloud mist and washed the garden with ripples of cool, milky light. And the light picked out the face of Jorge Ibañez, flattened against the adobe wall, his heavy

eyes alive and hating, his pendulous lips turned back from his ugly yellow teeth.

For a moment we stared at each other in mute loathing. Then I shut the window silently, hunted up my kimono and slippers, and sallied forth to see how Encarnación was taking the affair. Her door was locked, but she opened it when she heard my voice.

"It was Don Jorge, Señora," she whimpered. "He wanted to come in, but I didn't unlock the door." She was clad in a straight, old-fashioned white-cotton nightie, and her thick hair lay unplaited on her shoulders. The pink in her cheeks had deepened to scarlet, and her soft, shallow brown eyes seemed darker—more glowing.

"I think, Encarnación, I shall lock you in. It is better—no?"

She nodded, her damp red lips parted.

I slept that night with the key under my pillow.

On Monday morning early the men returned to the mine, and I breathed easier. But my relief was short-lived. A couple of days later Min came to tea with me, and I knew by the light in her eye that she had something on me. She drank her tea genteelly, her little finger thrown into second, and nibbled politely at her toast.

"Are you aware," she asked sweetly, "that the native boys from the *Oficina* are running after your Encarnación? And Ibañez must have come down from the mine again. My Felicidad saw her walking up the river trail with him yesterday, and the Sereno told the new boy who works in my garden that he has caught young Sanchez tapping at her door twice."

I wanted frightfully to say, "Damn your Felicidad; she's always seeing something." Instead, I choked over a swallow of very hot tea, and as Min thumped my back she continued:

"But it's only what I told you. You remember I warned you that day she first came into camp?"

So a couple of months went by. I spoke with Encarnación on the wages of sin in my halting, uncertain Spanish; and she listened with parted lips and nods of approval. I locked her in when the boys came down from the mine. I threatened the Sereno with sudden and horrible death if he allowed anyone to molest her.

Then came August and the first tender hint of spring. Frail gray clouds filmed a sky, blue so long that the eyes ached with the sight of it; a tentative flurry of rain laid the choking black dust and wooed forth tiny green shoots in the gardens; the drooping, anæmic eucalyptus trees by the camp wall revived and filled the air with their stinging, cattish odor.

In the middle of the month fell the feast of the Assumption. The Assumption in our particular part of Bolivia is one of the really important fiestas. Each year a Cholo is elected *patrón* of the festivities, and he considers himself indeed blessed, even though it may take every *centavo* of his meager savings to finance the affair. The *cura* comes from the little pueblo many kilometers down the valley, christens the year's crop of babies, and formally unites in marriage the lovers of the vicinity, who in most cases regard this benefit of clergy merely as a bit of elegance. Dancing and drinking continue for days, and the Gringo women of the camp rave helplessly because all the house servants boldly absent themselves.

Directly across the camp wall, on the other side of the little river, was the small adobe *capilla*. On the Wednesday morning preceding the actual day of the fiesta its cracked bell rang out a summons—a jaunty, provocative summons that made the hair on the back of your neck crisp and sent little sparkling stabs through you. None of your Anglo-Saxon "come to church, come to church, come to church" peals, but a clarion call to dance, to drink, to love. In answer to the invitation a drum in the native village rolled, a reed pipe screamed, a blast of dynamite burst with a sickening crash; and the fiesta was on. For four long days and nights the earth vibrated to the scuff, scuff, scuff of feet dancing on its sun-baked face; the drums throbbed a dogged, persistent accompaniment to the pipes' endless repetition of a single theme; the dynamite blasts increased in frequence and violence. The Blessed Lady and *El Señor*, her Son, were carried from the chapel in procession, hailed with deafening roars of dynamite, twined with serpentina, pelted with confetti; then returned to the peace of their shadowed shrines—their little part in the drama quickly accomplished. About the drums and pipes men circled in a sort of hesitating trot—round and round and round, with dizzying intensity. Groups of women in brilliant *polleras* and vivid shawls clasped hands and whirled in circles—bright

pinwheels of color against the toneless hills. Men and women arm in arm formed a long line and marched in a sort of follow-my-leader game, circling, wheeling, twisting snakewise. At night cheap German fireworks exploded and threw balls of red and blue and green into our camp. When for a few minutes the uproar stopped, the silence was vast, terrifying.

During those four days Encarnación worked with savage diligence. The almond-blossom pink on her cheekbones deepened, and her soft red mouth tightened a little. Each day, when the last chore had been finished to the smallest detail, she and Cazador would huddle close together by the wall and watch the dancers somberly. She never asked to join them, and I breathed easier as each night came and I could lock the door of her room and carry the key away.

With Sunday came the final outburst of the fiesta. The dynamite had given out. Men and women lay in sodden heaps on the scarred, trodden ground—sated with dancing and the raw alcohol they had been drinking for four days. The band still mumbled on, but in spasmodic jerks, as if the players occasionally fell into fitful sleep. And when tea time came Encarnación and Cazador had vanished. I searched through our camp for them, then stood by the wall and strained my eyes for a sight of her mauve *pollera* among the few swaying forms still dancing to the lagging strains of the music. When darkness came, I sent the Sereno to hunt for her.

"*No parece, Señora,*" he reported briefly when he returned an hour later.

I went to her room. Everything was in order. The bed was smooth and neat, her clothes were hanging in the corner. The little rickety table had been turned into an altar. It was draped with cheap lace and adorned with a huge pink bow. A gay lithograph of the Virgin in a garish gilt frame stood in the center, before it a cracked cup full of pansies, and on either side candles stuck on saucers with their own grease. On the floor in front of the altar was a small pillow, still dented with the imprint of knees.

All day Monday I awaited the return of Encarnación. On Tuesday morning Pepita, my laundress, tottered in. She was frowzy and soiled, and her little felt hat—insignia of the Indian—was tilted recklessly on one eyebrow.

"You have returned," I remarked haughtily.

"I have returned, Señora." An outrageous leer disclosed her toothless jaws and cracked tiny channels in the dirt of her face. "For five days and five nights have I danced and been very drunk, but when the fiesta is over I return to my Señora. And Encarnación?"

"I don't know," I said fretfully. The pretty, childish face had a troublesome way of popping up before my eyes and disturbing me.

Pepita removed her hat from her tousled head and hung it on its accustomed nail.

"I shall now wash my clothes," she announced virtuously. "She also will return."

I suspected that the old devil knew where Encarnación was, but I did not ask her. She would probably not tell the truth, and I had no way of forcing the girl to return anyway.

That day at lunchtime one of the men from the Office stopped at my gate.

"Your pretty Encarnación—hasn't she been raising hell?" he grinned.

"Encarnación! Where is she?"

"Over at the Office right now, standing up in a corner bawling her head off. It seems young Ibañez found her at the fiesta on Sunday and took her to the mine tent. He's had her locked up there ever since. The Sereno heard Cazador whining and reported it to the Office. Say, the Old Man's in a swell rage over it. You know the rules about bringing women into camp. Well, he says Ibañez's got to marry the girl or out of camp they both go. I call it nerve, this talk of marrying. Ibañez comes of a good family. Of course, he says he'll be damned if he'll marry any . . . Well, you know what he'd call the kid. So this afternoon out they go. Say, Min'll have one on you."

Something hot and savage turned me nearly blind, and I wanted to lean across the gate and smear the silly grin off the man's face with a clawing hand. Instead, I said rather thickly:

"Too bad! You fellows never gave the poor kid a chance—did you?"

And I turned and walked into my door.

I had just finished my lunch when Pepita sidled in and announced:

"Encarnación, Señora."

She was dirty and bedraggled. Her mauve skirt was torn and stained, her face was distorted with weeping. Cazador, matted and dusty, cringed at her side.

"Señora," she said softly, and her dry, swollen lips twisted into a cracked smile.

"Encarnación," I answered blankly. Cazador drew near and laid a timid paw in my lap. "You must go," I cried desperately. "You must go and now. The *Gerente* is very angry. He says you cannot stay in camp."

"But at the fiesta, Señora, they made me very drunk, and when I woke up I was in the tent of Don Jorge—locked in. And where can I go, Señora?"

Hesitatingly and with a feeling of sick revolt I tried to explain to the girl what I did not well understand myself—her sin against a society that had never given her a running chance, the reward she must expect to reap. Her round, red-rimmed eyes never left my face.

"I shall go," she said flatly, and she stumbled from the room, Cazador slinking close to her torn mauve skirt.

I had stood enough for one day. Swiftly and in abject fear of meeting my comrade Min, I left the house and climbed unhappily up the steep trail that led away from camp. The pulsing hum of spring was in the air. A couple of little green birds scolded and fussed over their housekeeping arrangements in a twisted bush; a snow-white lamb quavered after its indifferent mother with trembling, new-born legs; a pair of amorous llamas threw back their heads and regarded me with scarifying disdain. When I reached the little ledge where I was wont to retire from a distasteful world, I sat down and gazed unblinkingly down the river path. Presently around the curve emerged a small, slight figure—a figure somewhat bent beneath a bundle swung on its back. By its side padded a white dot that was a dog. The two were headed towards Rosario.

Often in the weeks that followed I met Encarnación on the trail. Her step had regained its spring, her clothes were gayer than ever. Cazador, washed and combed to a woolly whiteness, always accompanied her. Our greetings were restrained and invariably the same.

"Señora," she would breathe softly.

"Encarnación," I would reply. And we would pass on our separate ways.

Then the rains came in earnest. Day after day a flat, leaden sky hung low over our heads, scudding banks of clouds raced up the valley, the river rose and cut off our source of supplies. Late in November came a short respite—hours of thin, uncertain sunshine alternated by smashing showers with thunder that roared and blared amongst the mountains like a mighty battle. And always Pepita and I kept an eye on the steep river trail, hoping for a sight of the first sad little gray head that would mean a burro train had forded the angry stream and was bringing up potatoes, green vegetables, eggs, and oranges from the hot country below. Late one afternoon slowly over the crest of the hill emerged a straggling procession—a litter carried by four Indians, and around it a milling crowd of men, women, children, and dogs. Pepita gave an appreciative cluck.

"A death, Señora?" she queried gloatingly.

"Who knows! Perhaps it is but an *enfermo* being brought up from Rosario to the hospital. However, you may go and see," I added.

She pulled her shawl over her head and dashed over the little foot bridge that led to the native village, with a speed that belied her own account of her age—either forty-five or seventy-six, she could not quite remember which.

The straggling cavalcade, augmented now by the people from our village, crawled painfully up the last cruel pull to the small *calamina* hospital owned by the Company. I watched Pepita bound up the hill behind it, close in on it, work her way to the side of the litter. Ten minutes later she stood beside me, her breath coming pantingly, her small black eyes shining, the hairs on a large mole on her chin bristling with excitement.

"Señora," she gasped, "it is Encarnación! *Jesús Maria*, Encarnación, Señora! It is terrible—most terrible. She is cut—cut in many places. There is blood—blood everywhere. Her legs, her side, her arms, her face—cut in seven parts. One ear, Señora—gone, quite gone. And both her *trenzas* cut completely off." Pepita held out between her thumb and forefinger one of her own thick, long-lobed ears and clutched at her untidy pigtails to demonstrate the horror of the situation.

In an instant a blossomy, child's face swam before my eyes, and I steadied myself against the wall.

"But, Pepita, not Encarnación! Surely not Encarnación!"

"*Sí, Señora, Encarnación.* And she will surely die, for has she not been most wicked?" Pepita blew her nose fervently on the hem of her skirt, and in her old, dull eyes was an inarticulate triumph—the triumph of age frustrated over youth too frustrated. "*Por Dios*, did she not take from another woman her man? And the woman, with the child of the man in her belly, meets Encarnación in the plaza of Rosario, and she says, 'Give me back my man.' And Encarnación laughs, and says, 'Why don't you keep your man? I don't want him.' And the woman pulls a knife from under her shawl, and she cuts and cuts and cuts, and Encarnación falls on the ground, and Cazador tries to save her, and he gets cut also, and then the men come and pull the woman off. And now Encarnación is at the hospital about to die. *Jesús*, what will become of her soul?"

Pepita acted each incident of the ghastly drama. She was the woman, she was Encarnación, she was Cazador, snarling and lunging at my legs.

"I must go at once to the hospital and see her."

Even as I spoke Felipa, the young native nurse, ran down the hill and into camp.

"Señora, the Doctor asks you to do him the grand favor of coming to the hospital at once. La Encarnación calls and calls for you, and she will surely die in a little time."

Felipa's face was smoky blue, and her pale lips quivered nervously. She and Encarnación had been friends.

I ran up the steep trail, my heart pounding under my ribs, pushed my way through the crowd in front of the hospital, and met the Doctor at the door.

"She wants to see you," he said briefly. "It'll be over in a few minutes. It isn't even worth while taking off her clothes. She's hacked to a fare-you-well."

We stepped into the tiny hospital ward. On the bed nearest the door was a huddled mound of dirty, bloody clothes—slim gray kid boots with silk laces and tassels at the top, a mauve skirt slashed into ribbons, a blood-stiffened lace blouse—and above, a head so swathed in bandages that nothing showed but a tiny circle of face with long brown lashes lying on the

waxen, yellow skin. At the foot of the bed crouched Cazador, dyed scarlet with blood—scarlet like the sins of his mistress. He whined when he saw me, and sidled closer to an edge of skirt that hung to the floor.

The Doctor and I stood on either side of the bed, watching the still form, listening to the quick, painful breathing.

"God!" said the Doctor softly, "the pity of it—the waste of it. But it was inevitable. She was headed for this from the minute she was born, with her Indian mind and her Gringo soul and her beautiful body. She never had a ghost of a chance."

As he finished speaking, the long lashes lifted. Encarnación was looking at me, and in her brown-velvet eyes was neither fright nor pain—only a sort of numbed puzzlement.

"Señora," she said—her old greeting, but her voice was roughened and dry. I bent over her and took her cold, sweaty hand, and she seemed casting about in her slow, inarticulate way for some word. Then a shadow of her old smile crinkled the corners of her eyes, and I stooped low to catch the stumbling whisper.

"*Adiós*," she said. "*Adiós, Señora mía.*"

THE CONTINENTAL ANGLE

BY WILLIAM DUDLEY PELLEY

FROM *Chicago Tribune*

WILLIAM DUDLEY PELLEY

will be remembered for that vivid story, "The Face in the Window," which was reprinted a decade ago in Volume II of this series. Mr. Pelley's keen observative powers and fine craftsmanship have given him a deserved importance among contemporary short-story writers.

I FIRST heard of the Krule woman through Uncle Joe Fodder. The time, I recall, was back in 1912.

Once a week the venerable Grand Army man came over from his livery stable and spent a couple of hours pawing among the upstate exchanges. All too often he made himself a nuisance, settling before the big pine table where my partner and I did most of our work. Yet he rarely appeared without bringing us items.

"See we're goin' t' have a new bakeshop in town," he remarked this morning in the year above specified. "Woman named Krule. Rented that store in th' Jones block where Bud had his market. Stranger, I think. I hope she makes out. Elite's baked goods are an insult t' your stommick."

"How'd you hear about her?" asked Sam Hod, my partner.

"Bud Jones was tellin' me—who rented her th' place. Gonna do all her own cookin', as I understand it. Tried t' buy th' Elite but Hoadley wouldn't sell."

"Cruel, you say her name is?"

"No, Krule—K-r-u-l-e—Krule!"

"What nationality's that?"

"Dutch, I think."

"Has she got any folks?"

"Bud didn't mention, but I took it she's widowed. Comes fr'm Bosting, I think—or somewheres close by it. Bud did say she wanted t' rent th' three rooms upstairs, t' live there herself. An' she's ordered a stove as big as a house."

"How old a woman?"

"Well, now, Bud didn't mention that, either. But he spoke of her size. It tickled him pink."

"Her what?"

"Fattest female he ever set eyes on. Said he'd like t' see her in a bathin' suit; her legs must be wonders. She's gone back t' Bosting t' fetch up her stuff an' th' place'll be open in two or three weeks."

We verified this information and mentioned it that night in a small front page paragraph. At the end of the fortnight the woman reappeared.

When I saw her I smiled, she being the most elephantine individual that ever walked up Main Street. A woman in her fifties, scarcely five feet in height, she had a bosom like a table top and the equator for a waist. Her hair was iron gray, with a square Dutch head set directly on her shoulders. Her torso was barrel-like and her arms like tree boughs. A caricature, you think? I leave it to anyone who knows her here in Paris. A huge roll of flesh, thick as an ordinary man's wrist, made the back of her neck. And she didn't walk—she trundled.

And yet I liked her eyes.

They were robin's egg blue, wide apart and honest. Her pan-o'-dough face was saved by those eyes. They held a docile gullibility that was altogether lovely. One could no more conceive of Mrs. Krule cheating anyone, or descending to chicanery, than one could conceive of one's own mother going to jail for firing orphanages or kicking the crutches out from under cripples.

An incident attending my first call is of note.

I had visited the new bakery—she named it the Dutch Oven, by the way—to compliment her on the powdery white aspect of the place and establish relations that might lead to advertising. Two women patrons were present ahead of me. As the proprietress trundled to one of her windows to fill a paper bag with designated pastries I beheld a boy named Sibley with his nose against the glass.

A wild little nondescript urchin was Benny Sibley, hatless and barefoot, his features and clothing showing parental indifference. A mangy, hybrid Airedale was likewise attracted by those window delicacies. It stood on hind legs beside the tattered youngster, paws against the pane where it left dirty spots. Not at all a nice advertisement to have near those edibles, for the Sibley boy's ensemble was unspeakably besmirched.

Yet stout Mrs. Krule did not shoo him away. She waited till her two women patrons had departed. Then she went to the window to readjust her trays. Keeping her bulk toward me so I wouldn't see, she contrived to snitch up one luscious eclair. To the door she went next, as to scatter the flies. Under the secrecy of her apron, without a spoken word, she slipped the pastry to the startled boy's hands.

Whereupon he turned and bolted, the dog loping after.

Mrs. Krule affected to be finicky about those flies on her door screen. Then she turned and came toward me, avoiding my eyes. She offered no comment on what she had done. She might have looked as ashamed had she struck the boy brutally.

I wanted to warn her that she was making an error, doing that sort of thing. The neighborhood urchins would make her life miserable. Yet I said nothing.

Her husband was dead, she told me. Three daughters in Holland were married; had children. Not wishing to be dependent on them, she had joined a brother in a Boston delicatessen. But the man had sold out and gone back to the Netherlands. Because the Vanderburg family up on Beech Street were relatives of hers, she had come up to visit them. Which had acquainted her with Paris, Vt., and the dissatisfaction being given by the Elite.

I made note of these details. From time to time other customers entered. They compelled her to rise from the plain wooden chair planted by the cash register, each time with an effort. In those moments of being seated, the only evidence I had that our motherly Dutch bakeress possessed knees was her mannerism of keeping her stolid hands planted firmly upon them.

"You mean you're going to do your own cooking, nights," I exclaimed, perceiving she was due to lose some of her rotundity.

"Somevon to help me, I get," she responded, "ven der business pays me."

That time came quickly. The Dutch Oven on Cross Street had swung three-quarters of the bakery trade away from the Elite within a month of the day her stand opened.

I was making my regular nightly call at her place some three weeks later when she spoke to me about an assistant.

"Ten dollars by der veek I pay," she informed me, "for somevon to vait on der people. Maybe trade gets goot und I pay more."

I scratched my chin in reflection.

"You remember that youngster to whom you presented that free eclair?" I said finally. "Well, his name was Sibley and he lives with his mother—and two sisters—over on River Street. Josie Sibley's husband was horribly scalded in a dye vat at the process works. Some declare the man jumped into

it deliberately—committed suicide—but no one has proof. What I'm getting at is, the mother has had a tough break since and tending your counter might solve two problems: hers and your own."

At once Mrs. Krule wanted to know all about Josie Sibley, her man's accident, the ages of the children, why the father might have taken his life. She listened attentively to what I imparted, making a little compassionate croon after each of my statements.

"In some ways Josie's peculiar," I said. "She talks altogether too much and some folks say she's inclined to be bossy—that she bossed Herb till he jumped in a dye vat to end it. But perhaps she can't help it. Her mother did the same to her father, and after marrying Herb she discovered herself in her mother's predicament: wedded to a man who'd stand for it. And so Herb got it. That doesn't alter the fact that she's got to work and raise those three children——"

"It ain't goot to boss men!"

"Well, Josie's up against it. The boy is thirteen—just the age to get into costly mischief—and from present indications she's going to have plenty of trouble raising him. The two girls are twins——"

"Maybe," said Mrs. Krule, "for dot kind I pay fifteen dollars."

And she did. But before the end of summer I found myself wishing I had been more discerning.

Josephine was a small, wiry, nervous female with snapping black eyes and sharply chiseled chin. She had not been working at the Oven a week before portly Mrs. Krule discovered her streak of spleenish domineering. If Josie was going to "wear out her feet" waiting on trade, the shop must be arranged according to her whim. And when it came to bakers—for one soon had to be acquired—no man stayed very long if Josie didn't like him. And usually she didn't.

"You don't like men, yah?" Mrs. Krule commented after a particularly apt baker had taken his departure—after explaining his opinion of Josie with blasphemy.

"They give me an ache," was Josie's rejoinder.

Old Mrs. Krule was painfully perplexed. She sat in her wooden chair, hands on her knees, head bent slightly forward, studying Josie as she slammed the trays about.

"Ach?" she repeated.

"I've got a supreme contempt for them. All they're good for is to make a woman trouble. I never saw one who could care for himself. One capable woman's worth half a dozen men bunched together."

Old Mrs. Krule shook her square head.

"Your husband then, you don't love him?"

"Oh—love!"

"But in my country, men they are different——"

"Only because you European women let them get the upper hand. It fairly burns me up. That dago woman's another; she lives across the street. The way she kotows to that man she's married—thinks he's a little tin god——"

"Men got more brains than women!"

"Oh, bosh and nonsense!"

"Ain't they?"

Josie laughed shrilly—her only response. And Mrs. Krule, bakeress, was increasingly troubled.

"You got son——" she began.

"God knows why," Josie interrupted.

"You call dogs bad names and they don't know nodding else but," argued the Dutch woman. "Some day maybe your own son show you."

"He's the least of my worries," the mother contended.

And two years went by with this sort of squabbling.

Josie ensconced herself as a fixture at the Oven. Many new customers thought her the proprietress. Perhaps from the way she was allowed to run things, the portly owner being peaceable by temperament, she finally believed it herself. Anyhow, she allowed her youngsters to come in after school and help themselves to the bakestuffs at random. And she actually told Mrs. Krule to go back to her ovens and "run her end of it" when the Dutch woman feebly protested against Benny lugging out fourteen crullers one night to treat the members of a scrub lot ball team.

Furthermore, that Josephine wasn't wholly consistent in her moralities was widely complained of by Paris women folk. She would look them straight in the eye and tell them that goods baked three days ago had been fresh the previous evening. And a fine hullabaloo was created one Saturday afternoon

when she short-changed the small Pratt boy on a five-dollar note and refused to rectify her error till the Pratt woman appeared with Chief Hogan in tow.

My personal experience with Josie's dishonesty came of an evening in 1914. I gave her a five-dollar note for some bakestuffs. My bill, as rung up, was a dollar-eighteen. Reaching the door with my purchase, I counted my money and had three thirty-five.

"You've made a mistake," I said, turning back.

"I never make mistakes," flared Josie.

"Well, anyhow, I'm short just forty-seven cents."

Biting her lip, she rechecked my items.

"You see," she said scathingly, "the goods that you've bought make a dollar sixty-five."

"But that isn't what you rang up on the register."

"I don't know that it's any of your business what I've rung on the register."

I looked at her queerly. She started to mumble about punching wrong keys.

"I'm not forgetting," I reminded her, "that I was responsible for Mrs. Krule employing you."

"My conscience doesn't hurt me," Josie retorted. "What right has a foreigner to come over here and settle in an American town like Paris? Take trade away from native born Vermonters?"

"She seems to have provided you with a pretty fair living the last twenty months."

"Oh, I don't know. It's a question how much business she'd have if I wasn't up front here to wait on people."

I walked home with misgivings.

Before I saw Josie or Frau Krule again, however, the latter called me one night on the phone. Being a midweek evening, the bakery was closed.

"You come over and see me, yah?" she begged. She seemed distressed. I went over to the Oven.

I found Mother Krule seated in her wooden-bottomed chair behind her main counter, foggy spectacles on her eyes, pain on her face—and brown paper before her covered over with figures.

"You and me friends are, yah?" she greeted me. And her placid mouth quivered. "No more money I make," she said

raggedly. "Last month eighty-von dollars she steals from me alretty."

We went over the figures scrawled on the paper.

"Perhaps we'd better hunt up Judge Wright," I finally said when theft was irrefutable. "You can swear out a warrant for Josie's arrest."

"Ach, no!" cried Mrs. Krule. "Der mother of children she iss. I give her der money dot from me she steals. But . . . you tell her no more she comes here to work."

I saw that Josie's spleen had so bullied the Dutch woman that Mother Krule feared discharge might be impossible—that Josie mightn't accept it. I had wished Josie on her. I must take her off.

Which I did. With relish.

"Well, I can tell you one thing," Josie flamed in my office before slamming my door, "she's made a first class enemy of me and she'll live to rue it!"

Benny Sibley avenged his mother in a manner more drastic. Getting his "gang" together, they congregated across the street from the bakeshop. Waiting till walks were empty of pedestrians, they sent a volley of bricks at Mrs. Krule's shop front. Both windows crashed with a roar like sharp thunder. Speeding through an alley, the gang disappeared.

The hapless Dutch Oven had to close for a week. The shop's merchandise, fraught with slivered glass, was a passing loss. One of the "gang" squealed on Benny, who was taken into custody. The case was squared by the widow paying the cost of new windows and the boy turned loose with stern judicial reprimand.

But Josie Sibley was a smoldering fury. "Her turn would come," she gave out publicly, though why she felt herself entitled to a "turn" was something that Paris could not quite decipher. The result of the episode was to swing community sentiment over to the Oven thrice stronger than ever.

And Abe Hoadley was so hard hit that he sold the Elite to three Greeks from Springfield.

Josephine Sibley went to work for those Greeks.

For two years and a half after coming to Paris, Mother Krule ran the Dutch Oven in Cross Street, working hard, giving honest values, accumulating enough to buy a little cottage house up on Putney Street extension. One of her own

nieces, Hulda Vanderburg, had grown big enough to succeed Josie Sibley, and a Dutchman named Van Noot came up from North Adams to shoulder the kitchen work.

And the Greeks in the Elite, doubtless goaded by Josie, at length saw a chance to annihilate competition. Try as they would, their purchase was a loss. They would set up a monopoly on Vermonttown bakestuffs.

The week following America's official entry into the war, a swarthy young stranger appeared in the Oven. While Hulda went back to fetch in fresh rolls, he produced a small can with a perforated top.

Over two luscious displays of cream puffs he criminally sifted a pint of powdered arsenic.

We know, because the can was later found, the case against him proven, and the man at this moment is confined in Windsor prison.

Paris went insane. Sixteen people were hovering 'twixt life and death next day. Then serpentine rumor lifted its head. The Oven's proprietress wasn't Dutch, but Prussian.

The war had reached Vermont. . . .

By six o'clock that night a small mob was collecting in the Paris business section and stoutish Mother Krule was in danger of her life.

"Something's got to be done, Sam!" I cried to my partner. "Even if the woman was Prussian, poisoning Paris—wrecking her business—would be the height of nonsense."

"All the same," answered Sam, "we'd better be discreet. War sentiment's high."

"Discreet, hell! That mild-eyed old woman wouldn't bash a mosquito. There's talk that Fred Wallace has been hanging around Josephine."

Fred's brother, Asher, was lying close to death. He'd eaten three of the poisoned puffs and Fred's mouth was largest in affecting retribution.

"Well, what if he has?"

"Put two and two together. A thoroughly vile woman is behind all this, getting town 'patriots' to pull her chestnuts from the fire. I'm going to get some sensible men together to stand by Mother Krule. She's no more German than you or Mike Hogan."

I got Uncle Joe Fodder, Judge Amos Farmer, and Sheriff

Amos Crumpett. Sam later followed. "To protect you," he said.

At a quarter to eight we got out to Putney Street. We found Mother Krule sitting on a crate in a little shed at the foot of her garden. She had nowhere else to "hide." We saw her face tear-smeared when we finally gained entrance.

"We'll see you ain't hurt, ma'am," said grim-lipped Sheriff Crumpett.

We hadn't been with the woman ten minutes before one of the Price boys came tearing through the garden.

"There's a big crowd headed up Elm Street!" he cried. "They're after Missus Krule."

That filled the bakeress with new terror palsy. But Uncle Joe voiced the general sentiment.

"I ain't shot a gun since th' mess t' *Mennarsus*. But I'll do it t'night t' save Paris fr'm disgrace."

He had brought an antiquated horse-pistol with him, we discovered. He brandished it suggestively as the fraught moments passed.

The mob came up Elm Street and turned the far corner. Up Putney Street they spilled, red fire torches blazing. They had found the red fire in the depot supply room.

"Mein Gott! Mein Gott!" cried the fear-crazed bakeress.

"Keep quiet!" ordered Farmer. "Don't squeal till you're hurt."

The crowd reached the street directly before the house. By sheer press of numbers it broke flat the fence. In a mischief-bent juggernaut of devastation the flower beds were ruined. At the first crash of glass, Sheriff Crumpett stepped out.

"Stop where you are—you silly bunch of hoodlums!"

Every person in the mob heard the old man's angry challenge.

Fred Wallace was ring leader; there was no doubt about it. He spread out both arms at his back. They later pushed him forward with his fellows by milling weight of numbers.

"We're after that Hun!" the Wallace person cried.

"That so? Just why?"

"Because she's a poisoner—a general public menace!"

"She ain't half th' public menace you be, Fred Wallace. Fine way, this is, t' show your cheap patriotism."

"Wallace," ordered Farmer, wiry hair bristling, "s'pose you go home—or git into a uniform."

"You can't order us home!" lifted half a dozen voices. The red fire blazed brighter. It lighted the district with barbaric nimbus.

Uncle Joe Fodder got out beside Farmer. His voice cackled queerly: "Th' first man who makes a move t' hurt Mrs. Krule gets a shot through th' stommick!"

The vandals saw his pistol. Many of them quailed.

"A fine commander of the G. A. R. you are!"

"I see more war from '61 to '65 than most of you'll see if you lived t' be a hundred. An' we didn't fight women!"

"Women in your day didn't know how to fight!" I heard a voice cry shrilly—a voice that I recognized—and not a man's voice either.

"Rush 'em!" cried a hoodlum, shrilly, from the rear.

An ugly pushing started anew. Wallace slid before it. Uncle Joe steadied his pistol on a forearm. I saw it belch fire and Wallace went tumbling. He doubled like a jack knife. Then real passions were loosed.

Judge Farmer and the sheriff were swept against the fence. Something bashed me in the head. Silver stars showered me. I went down under boots. Groggy from the brickbat, I had the sensation of an army sprawling over me. Some members of it tripped. Weight piled upon me. I lost a front tooth. One cheek was scraped open.

"Come on, you cowards!" I heard that female voice again. "Do what you started. Vermont's got no place for foreigners, anyhow!"

A barrage of the brickbats rained down upon the toolshed. Only Uncle Joe kept his feet and his freedom. Turning his pistol about as a blackjack, he hammered at heads and felled hoodlums in groups. I fought to get up and once more was knocked prostrate. The shed was ripped open.

"It's empty!" cried voices in angry surprise.

Mrs. Krule had escaped. While the sheriff had argued with Wallace in front, Sam Hod had kicked boards from the structure in the rear. He had helped the woman out and over a wall. I found her later at my partner's home when I came to report the firing of the cottage.

For that cottage was fired. Benny Sibley tearfully confessed next day that he'd used a club to break a window and touched a match to an inside lace curtain.

"I thought it was all right," he blubbered. "We're at war with Germans, ain't we?"

The Putney Street corner was aflare with yellow red. The small wooden structure blazed and burned like kindling. That stopped the conflict somewhat. And some one had sense to turn in an alarm.

Up Elm Street came the wagons, sirens heightening the tumult. The chemical car first, with men dropping off to link hose with hydrants. The fire engine next, sparks flying bizarrely. Then Harry Prescott, fire chief, in his high-geared red flivver. Judge Farmer got to Harry.

"T' hell with th' house. Save th' property adjoinin'."

Mrs. Krule's little home was already doomed.

"I can't do much," cried Harry, "with this crowd raisin' Cain!"

"Turn your hose on 'em, then," the wrathy judge responded. "If they won't stop this nonsense, wash 'em with water."

A new burst of brickbats had greeted the firemen. All the hoodlums from down below the freight yards had come there to enjoy an evening of pillage. The house as a bonfire epitomized their riot. A billet of wood struck Harry in the head. It knocked off his helmet and somebody kicked it.

"Give 'em the works!" he cried to Jeb Pumpton.

It might have been comic, under less tragic circumstances. Three lines of hose had finally been hooked up. They swelled now like pythons. Nozzles coughed—spat—erupted. A battery of water plowed the ground up like shells. The hosemen fought the pressure. They got the nozzles lifted and began to fan the yard.

Toughs were mowed down like puppets. A fellow named Hager was turned end for end; the stream stayed upon him and rolled him like a can. Whole groups lost their footing and brought up against the fence. In less than half a minute a gasping, clawing, bespattered mêlée was shoved like offal into far darkened corners.

"Good God—wait!" cried Farmer suddenly. He seized Pumpton's arm. "That's a woman you're wettin'. She can't gain her feet."

The stream was pushed aside. Crumpled against the fence was a limp human body. The judge reached it first.

"Josie Sibley!" he exclaimed. "Josie with her neck broke!"

"Things have a queer way of adjustin' theirselves, don't they?" said the sheriff. The mob had disintegrated quickly enough. The last of the embers were falling in the cellar hole.

"Now, what'll become of her kids?" mused Fodder. The old man, mud-splashed, sank down on a crate.

"Why does a woman like her have 'em—kids—anyhow?" growled Crumpett. "What's gettin' int' th' womenfolks nowadays—that they've got t' lead riots an' such things as that?"

"Search me," said the hostler. "But one thing's certain—if Josie'd been home mindin' her young uns, all this wouldn't happened."

"It ain't th' American idea, stayin' home an' mindin' young uns. I heard Josie say so herself . . . t' ol' Mrs. Krule one night t' th' bakeshop."

The fire was put out and Josie Sibley's body was borne across the street. Later Blake Whipple's undertaking wagon came up to Jim Harper's and got it. I headed for Sam Hod's.

"Such troubles I make!" sobbed the portly Dutch bakeress —whom I found in Sam's sitting room.

"Fiddlesticks!" cried Alice Hod.

"They caught young Benny," I declared. "He fought like a wild cat. But they got it out of him that he fired the house."

Mrs. Krule became quiet and stolidly thoughtful. With fat arms propped up, handkerchief at her lips, she was suddenly oblivious to our discussion of the riot.

"Benny is goot boy," she finally pronounced. "When I tell his mama she can't work in my store, he go get stones and break all the windows."

"Call that good?" exclaimed Sam.

"He do it for him mama. That ain't so bad. But his mama don't remember that Benny iss a man. Me, I understand boys I can take little Benny and make him fine lad."

"I don't doubt but what the selectmen would be tickled pink to let you." I said it half in jest, not considering its effect.

"Yah? You think maybe they let me?"

"You don't mean you would!"

"Such troubles I make! I take little Benny and make him fine lad."

Thus it came about, seven days later in Judge Farmer's office, that five men sat stupefied.

"Ach, money!" cried the bakeress. "So easy I make it maybe I show Paris I don't put poison in cream puffs. I go back to my rooms in my bakeshop upstairs. Benny and Sybil and Gertrude I take there. And Benny I teach to say prayers and be goot. You let me haff him—yah?"

Mrs. Krule had arisen from her chair and come in front of Judge Farmer's table. She leaned upon it, her face ten inches from the rueful selectman's.

"I don't get it," said Farmer. "The mother of these kids treated you 'bout as narsty—"

"But such troubles I make, here in America. And without his mama, Benny make more. Benny iss goot boy. He yost need someone to love him. You let me have him, yah?"

"Well, I'm certainly willing if the rest are. I don't quite get the head and tail of it, but if you want to get hold of that little Indian and whale him as he deserves, I envy you the privilege. Go ahead and take 'em."

Mother Krule did.

However, she didn't whale them.

Gertrude admitted once in my hearing that beyond taking them by the ear occasionally at the commencement of her guardianship, the foster-mother laid neither palm nor stick on her charges. Josephine Sibley might have domineered over the fleshy bakeress but the latter had wholesome Dutch ideas about the propriety of small children doing it.

The twins appeared at school that fall, neat and well-mannered. Benny's gang dissolved. He broke no more windows and stole no more fruit. I recall his visit at our office just before I left for war. He'd come to apply for a job as carrier.

"Will you be strictly honest about bringing in collections?" my partner demanded.

"Yes, sir," Benny promised. "I've kinda laid off hurtin' Missus Krule's feelin's. She's awful soft inside, Missus Krule is, when you get to know her. 'Tain't a bit o' fun raisin' Cain with anyone who's soft inside. A feller feels he wants to sort o' chip in and help her. Besides, I never knew what a lot o' fun work was till she let me pitch in and do interestin' things, 'stead o' slappin' and jawin' all the time."

"Interesting things?"

She let me paint the inside o' the shop. Then she put it up to me to sort o' boss the gang that cleaned up the mess Fred Wallace made to her house on Putney Street. Ma'd never lemme do anything. I was just a kid to her, I guess. Missus Krule says that when things are straightened out, I can help the carpenters build a new house for us up on the old Putney cellar hole. She sort o' treats me like I was a man and so I just gotta be one."

"Report Monday night," Sam told him in parting.

"Yes, sir—thanks!" said Benny, putting on his cap.

"Why, the boy's a little gentleman!" cried my partner when Benny had departed.

If you come up to Paris to-day you can easily find the Dutch Oven on Cross Street, just around the corner from Main. She owns it still, though Van Noot runs it. Her heart began to misbehave after Sybil's marriage to an architect named Wilkes. Gertie finished high school and entered a normal school in Connecticut.

Benny was last to leave her. He had just turned seventeen the month of the adoption. He was made to go to high school and then—because of his bent for mechanics—he went out to Detroit and entered a factory. Six months after his departure he sent Mrs. Krule a clipping. She showed it to me one night in the bakery. Benny, it seemed, had specialized on engines. He had left the motor factory to take up work on planes and the clipping attested he had made his solo flight.

Nearly a dozen years ago that mob of hoodlums burned the Dutch woman's house. And Benny has come along in that time . . . yes, Benny has come along! . . .

Every evening in the year that weather permits, spring, summer, autumn, winter, a gray-haired old Dutch woman comes out on her back porch between eight and nine o'clock. Out into the yard she goes and seems to be idling around her property, yet waiting for something.

Then if the weather be clear, sooner or later off in the low southeast her mild blue eyes are sure to see a light—a moving light! Over the horizon it comes, inexorably mounting up cobalt heavens. Onward and onward—closer and closer—yet up toward the stars. Soon the doughty purr of a plane be-

comes audible. And always it passes directly over her house.

It is Benny Sibley piloting the night mail between New York and Montreal! . . .

Up there alone, between mountain tops and stars, strong young hands steady at controls, mind attuned to that savage motor, calm eyes fixed on flashing mountain beacons, another dauntless young eagle of the air is pushing through space on wings of silk and steel. The United States mail is going through. Benny is carrying it.

Somehow, it is the essence of glory—that conception of a great mail plane hurtling through the heavens night after night, regardless of storm, riot, holocaust, or flood. And the boy that twelve years ago was headed for the bad, who broke windows, stole fruit, fired houses, led a gang, has beautifully made good that Dutch woman's plea: "To me you give him. I make him goot man."

I often wonder what her thoughts are as she stands in the garden while the mail plane goes through. Strange, indeed, to think of the tousle-headed little roughneck who smashed glass and fired lace curtains, as the guiding brains of that long, gray, snarling thing of inexpressible power that must mount up so far some nights that the rotund little old lady in the garden can't see the signal of his flashlight. For Benny usually waves one. He knows she's down there wishing him Godspeed.

Sometimes the wild Shirkshires howl up the mountains—when we hear the faint throb of the night mail going through. Whole weeks have passed by when we have not caught sight of it . . . only that strong, virile pulse somewhere up there in nocturnal elements.

Yet I never lie comfortably in bed with rain beating down on the shingles and a book on my chest over which I've been nodding, and discern that faint throbbing growing constantly louder—till the whirr becomes a roar that dies in northern distance—that I don't breathe a little prayer for Sibley, up there in the cold and the dark, doing a man's job, making danger his calling in the advancement of our culture.

Josie Sibley took the attitude that nothing male was entitled to much respect. Mother Krule took the attitude that Benny was Man and respected him as such. And he had to perform in order to keep faith.

Oh well, I suppose it's the continental angle!

THE DIAMOND RING

BY JULIA PETERKIN

FROM *Good Housekeeping*

JULIA PETERKIN

is the author of a number of distinguished novels, among them "Scarlet Sister Mary," for which she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for the best American novel of 1929. From her plantation home near Charleston, S. C., she writes those stories which bear the charm of authentic Negro life, accentuated by the haunting overtones of the Gullah tongue.

BUBBA sat by the hearth near the bright, hot fire where Nancy's irons were heating.

Nancy, Bubba's young-looking adopted mother, was ironing for herself, now that the clothes she had washed and ironed for the white people at the Big House were all done. The split basket which held them was in the corner, piled high with smooth, clean garments carefully covered over with a sheet to keep dust from touching them until Bubba carried them back to the Big House where they belonged.

Nancy was guiding a hot iron carefully over a small, shining, pink length of satin, and the white lace that edged it became thin and beautiful as the iron's point pressed it smooth. When it was finished, she held up the ironed piece. Her eyes shone, her sweaty face beamed with a tender smile, as the white lace fell like foam among its cloudy pink folds.

"Look, Bubba. Did you ever see anything like dis shimmy? Great Gawd, it's a pure pity I's got to wear it underneath my top clothes. But it'll be next to my skin. When I walk up dat church aisle to-morrow night at de Sunday-school convention down de country, I'll pure strut. De people won' see dis lace and pink satin, but I'll feel 'em, and I'll know I'm de pure, highfalutin stuff. Yes, Lawd, I'll know it good and well."

Bubba looked, then he turned his eyes sadly away and gazed at the bright flames that fluttered so gaily over the oak wood. He was too down-hearted to speak. He was too weary to carry that heavy basket of clothes all the way to the Big House. He had cut all the wood for Nancy's ironing, and the short-handled old ax was dull. He had brought the sticks in all by himself, and the wood was heavy. Its weight made his back ache and his breath cut off short, as he struggled to tote the big armfuls across the yard from the woodpile up the five back steps. The steps almost broke down with the wood's weight as he came up them; yet when he dropped the wood on the hearth, because it was too heavy to lay gently down, and the ashes flew up about him and made the room gray with

their dust, Nancy had bawled out as she shook a hot iron at him:

"Quit you' crazy doins', boy! Look how you scatterin' ashes all over me and my clothes. You don't see me a-tryin' to git ready for de Sunday-school convention? If I wasn' so busy, I'd stop an' beat you wid one o' dem same sticks o' wood. Beat you good. Git de broom. Sweep up de hearth. Sweep up de floor. Sweep 'em easy, too. If you stir up any more ashes, I'll skin you."

As he swept the floor carefully, he knew nobody loved him. Nobody cared if he was weary. Nobody understood how he pure craved to ride on the merry-go-round yonder at the landing by the river. Nobody knew how many times his errand-running had been delayed while he feasted his hungry eyes on its splendors. But riding on that merry-go-round cost money, and he had no money. One little short ride cost ten cents, two nickels. To mount one of those red horses that galloped round and round, lifting their feet and beating time to the beautiful tunes which sang out so loud and fine, took cold, hard cash, and he had none. Nancy would give him none. She said it was a sin to waste money.

"Aun' Nancy, after I take de clothes home, couldn' I ride one time on de merry-go-round?" he risked timidly.

"Shut you' mouth, Bubba. I done told you no. You would fall off and break you' neck, den I'd have to stay home to bury you' stead o' gwine to de convention."

Tears filled his eyes. He knew how to ride. He had ridden mules bareback many a time when they went to the fields to plow, or to the spring to drink. He had ridden the bull yearling, the son of Nancy's brindle milch cow; and that bull yearling was contrary and hard to rule, with no bit or bridle to hold him to the path.

The merry-go-round horses had bridles, and saddles with stirrups. Of course, he could ride them, he could ride them as well as anybody, but when he asked Nancy for one lone dime, just one little thin dime, she said no. She made like she was afraid. She said the beautiful merry-go-round was a foolish contraption; he could ride on it all day and never get anywhere. Besides, it would kill him sure as the world, and he would be no good to her dead. To bury him would cost money. She wanted him to stay alive. She had worked hard to raise

him. When his mammy ran off with that strange man and left him, and his daddy left him, too, to fend for himself, she took him and fed him and clothed him. For all that his mammy or his daddy cared, Bubba might be in the bottom of the river right now, feeding catfish and eels. He ought to thank God he was big enough to pay her back for some of her trouble. He could never do enough to pay her back, but he could try; yes, he could try.

For him to pester her for a dime to waste riding on a merry-go-round was pure wickedness when she hardly had money enough to go on the boat to the Sunday-school convention. The thing played sinful tunes. She would not even listen at them. Bubba had better be thankful that he had clothes to cover his nakedness and a good bed to sleep in; that plenty of sweet potatoes were roasting in those ashes for him to eat; that he would not grow up to be a measly runt for lack of good victuals and good treatment; that he would grow up to be a Christian boy because he had a Christian lady to raise him.

"Go on an' take dem clothes home. When you git to de Big House, put de basket down, git de money, but don' tarry. Don't wait for 'em to count de clothes. Dey might miss dis shimmy. I ain't takin' de shimmy to keep, I'm just borrowing 'em. I'll wear 'em easy. I ain't gwine hurt 'em. When I git back from de Sunday-school convention, I'll wash 'em and iron 'em nice, and I'll put 'em in dat same basket and send 'em straight back where it belongs, right yonder to de Big House."

She smiled as she folded the shimmy carefully. "I wouldn' steal nothing, not for de whole world. Stealing is a sin, Bubba. People what steals goes to hell, straight to hell. Don't you never steal, son. It's a sin. A awful sin."

Bubba sighed. His heart ached in his breast. The scalloped newspaper covering the mantel shelf rustled in the heat which rose from the bright wood fire, but tears blurred his sight so he could hardly see it or the glass kerosene lamp whose smoked shade and half-filled bowl told how late Nancy burned it last night. Bina's Sunday shoes shining on the mantel beside the lamp were dim, too. Nancy had borrowed these to wear to the convention, since they were new and Nancy's own shoes were rusty and worn. Next to the shoes were Nancy's cold cob

pipe and her half-empty sack of tobacco. She had not taken time to fill and light the pipe since noon. That was why she was so nervish and short-patienced now.

"I wish I could ride just one time," Bubba sobbed.

"You's de biggest fool I ever seen, Bubba. Dem horses ain't a Gawd's thing but wood."

"Dey got manes and tails; dey got saddles; de saddles is got stirrups what swings all out and in when de horses gallops round and round to de music."

"Do shut you' mouth and stop you' cryin', Bubba," Nancy scolded. "Sometimes I think you ain' got all, de way you sets still and don' move. Wipe dat water out you' eyes befo' I lick you. You's too big to cry."

Nancy sniffed with scorn. "Go feed de chickens and pick up some chips, den hurry an' take dese clothes home. Soon as de boat comes, you got to go to de post-office and git a package for me. My cousin Sue yonder to town promised to lend me de loan of her diamond ring to wear to de Sunday-school convention. She ought to had sent it on de boat last week, but it ain' come. It's bound to come on de boat dis evenin', but I ain't got time to go git 'em. You got to go git 'em for me. So hurry and do all what you got to do. Go feed de chickens first thing, den come git de basket of clothes, an' I'll tell you what to say to de post-office man. Go on now. I ain't got time to talk to you no more. Feed de fowls good. I needs plenty of eggs."

Bubba stumbled to his feet and his heart beat with quick, glad strokes. He would not mind carrying the heavy basket of clothes now that he could see the merry-go-round when he went to the post office. He could look at it and hear its music, even if he could not mount a fine horse nor sit in one of its beautiful gold chariots.

He hurried to the corn barn and opened the door, quickly picked out three ears of corn for the pile and shucked them, then called the fowls to come eat. The rough grains felt good against his palms as he shelled them. If only they'd turn to dimes! Then he could ride a hundred times. As he scattered the grain over the ground for the flock of greedy hens, he laughed to see how they pushed and pecked each other. They had no manners at all. Old Becky, the domineck hen, pecked and pushed worse than any, yet she did not swallow a grain,

for she gave all she got to her children. If his mother had only been like Becky, then she would have stayed here with him, and she would have given him a dime to ride on the merry-go-round; but she had gone off with a strange man and left him.

"What you doin', Bubba?" Nancy shouted from the back door. "You done give de fowls a plenty. Pick up some chips now, den come take de basket of clothes home. De sun's droppin'. De boat'll soon be a blowin'."

He closed the corn barn door and latched it, then walked toward the wood pile where the old dull ax lay. Afternoon sunshine made the whole world bright. The logs of wood and chips shone. The fig and pomegranate trees were gold. The earth covering the sweet potato banks in the garden glowed red. The wide, dark leaves of the collard greens glistened. Red, green, gold. Those were the merry-go-round colors. But no music rang out here. He could hear nothing but bird songs, the wind rustling in the trees, the rush of the spring branch falling over into the deep duck-dam gully.

When a long, clear boat whistle sounded from the far bend in the river, Bubba roused. He must hurry. He could hear the boat chugging up against the tide, fetching cloth, and boxes of groceries, tobacco, and store-bought bread, and Nancy's diamond ring.

He ran to the house, took the five tottering back steps in two bounds, then stood patiently listening to Nancy's directions. His ears listened carefully. They marked every word Nancy spoke. He was to take the clothes home, get seventy-five cents, tie the money carefully in the corner of the pocket handkerchief Nancy gave him, then hurry to the post-office. He must wait until the other people had got their mail, so they would not hear him ask for the ring. He must stand outside the little square window where the post-office man handed the letters through and ask for a package for Miss Nancy Pineset.

When he got the package he was to make haste home. A diamond ring is a terribly costly thing. That ring cost twenty dollars, probably. As much as an acre of cotton; as much as a good milch cow; as much as all that corn in the corn barn. The package would be small, so he must hold it tight in both his hands. He must not trust to put it in his pocket. The pack-

age might drop out and get lost, then he and Nancy would be ruined forever. He must trust to nothing but his own two hands to hold that diamond ring. He must not stop to look at the merry-go-round. He must hurry home. Not too fast. Too much hurrying might make him miss and drop the ring, and if he let a soul know what was inside the package, she would skin him alive as soon as he got home.

Bubba promised everything, then with the heavy basket of clothes balanced on his head he went down the path, singing at the top of his voice.

"Go down, Moses,
'Way down in Egypt land;
Tell old Pharaoh
To let my people go."

His steps kept time with the words, so did his flopping pants as they swung about his thin legs. Briars stuck his bare toes, but he hardly felt them. A thorny wild plum scratched at his face, but he did not heed it. He could not ride, he must not look, but he could hear the merry-go-round music.

Yellow jessamine blossoms brightened up the thickets, and flocks of redbirds streaked the shadows. The smell of spring filled the air. Shy nonpareils darted in and out of the brushwood. Partridges whistled tempting calls. Bubba hurried on past them all, past everything, for his heart was full of the merry-go-round.

On he went, following the crooked path, then the wider, straighter road. Past the "Praise House" where the Christian people said prayers to God every Wednesday night; past the level black fields whose lately plowed sandy loam smelled sweet; past the great moss-hung oaks filled with yellow tassels, and the tall, smooth-barked pines which hummed a gentle song. The road was less rough and winding than the path, and as he neared the Big House, it turned aside and showed glimpses of yellow marsh blossoms shining along the edge of the river's dark tide-water stream.

He went to the back door without minding the bird dogs which barked and growled at him. Always before they had scared him nearly to death, but not to-day. He felt grave to-day.

When he got the money, two quarters, two dimes, one nickel, he tied it up in the corner of Nancy's kerchief, then hurried away, wishing one of those dimes belonged to him, but remembering that stealing was a sin which would send him to hell. Aunt Nancy said so, and she knew.

It was not long before he could see the post-office with its whitewashed front and green painted blinds. Black people crowded its small front porch. They had come to ask for mail, to exchange eggs for rations or kerosene, to see one another and laugh and talk, to ride the merry-go-round in the little open field next to the post-office. Now they were watching the boat sidle up to the wharf to unload what it brought. To-morrow morning, soon after first fowl crow, that same boat would be back to take Nancy to the Sunday-school convention. For two days he'd be free. He'd come back and watch the merry-go-round all day long to-morrow.

"Go down, Moses, 'way down in Egypt land," Bubba sang softly, for his heart burned so hot in his breast his wind was short.

A good look at the merry-go-round would maybe cool his craving and give him a sort of easement. When suddenly its loud, clear music rang out, Bubba's singing hushed. The horses and the chariots were beginning to turn. He was afraid to look long, for the diamond ring was on his mind; yet when he went to ask for it, he found the post-office window blocked with people. He must wait until they thinned out.

"Hey, Bubba," one sprightly old gray-haired man called to him.

"Howdy, Uncle Chaw-tobacco," Bubba answered politely.

"Whe's Miss Nancy dis evenin'?"

"She home," Bubba answered shyly.

"You come to get rations for 'em?"

Bubba hesitated. To say yes would be lying, but Nancy had warned him not to tell his business, although she had said lying was a bad sin.

"Yes, suh," Bubba lied bravely.

An elderly, fat black woman with her head tied neatly in a white head-kerchief laughed out merrily. "I declare to Gawd, Uncle, you say you is a hundred and forty years old, but you don't look a day over ninety to me. Not a day."

"Dat's de Gawd's truth, too," the others chimed in gaily,

and Uncle Chaw-tobacco got so flustered with happiness, he had to get his red pocket handkerchief out of his pocket and wipe the sweat out of his eyes.

As he did so a dime fell from its folds to the floor. Bubba's foot quickly covered it, but his mind said no. To take it would be stealing. He picked it up and returned it. Uncle made a low bow, dropped his dime into his pocket, and stammered to Bubba:

"Thank you kindly, son. Miss Nancy's lucky to have you. You is a nice, mannersable boy. You'll be big enough to plow by next year, enty?"

Then he strutted away importantly.

The people were all too busy with their own affairs to notice Bubba, as he went to stand outside on the post-office piazza and listen to the merry-go-round's beautiful music. His joy in hearing it almost drowned his sorrow that he could not ride on it. Suddenly an idea struck him: maybe if he asked Uncle Chaw-tobacco for that dime, he could get it. Or maybe if he asked him and that old woman for a nickel apiece, he could get a dime; or if he'd ask all these people to give him a penny apiece, that would be enough. More than twice ten were here. Which one should he ask first? He looked at them all, then he knew he could not ask at all. He longed to. He tried to make his feet walk straight toward Uncle Chaw-tobacco, who was sweet-talking a young girl in a corner, but they felt numb and would not move a single step. His feet were as coward-hearted as the rest of him.

The people were thinning out, leaving the post-office. The time had come for him to get the diamond ring. He moved toward the small, square window, stood underneath it, then looked up and said weakly,

"Is you got a package for Miss Nancy Pineset?"

"Who is that?" a gruff voice asked sternly.

"Dis me, Bubba, de boy what Miss Nancy is a-raisin'."

"Did she tell you to get this package for her?"

"Yes, suh. She send me at 'em. It's a diamond ring."

"A diamond ring? Who is sending Nancy a diamond ring?"

"She Cousin Sue, yonder to town. Aun' Nancy's gwine to wear 'em to de Sunday-school convention to-morrow."

He had forgotten. He had told about the diamond ring. Nancy would skin him alive if she found out.

Bubba shivered. Then he heard a grunt and saw a red, rough hand coming out through the small, square window. In the hand's big fingers was a small package wrapped in brown paper and tied with a red cord. He reached up and took it.

Outside the setting sun hung low behind the tall trees. Its yellow light glowed through the myrtle thickets, but it made their shadows darker than ever. Night was coming out of the earth. First dark was near. The precious minutes were going. He could not tarry long. He would take one good look at the red horses and gold chariots, then he would run home fast.

Bubba stepped softly toward the little open field where the merry-go-round whirled round and round, and both his hands held fast to the package with the diamond ring inside it.

The crowd which had filled the post-office now stood around the merry-go-round. Two young black bucks were holding their sweethearts' hands, inviting the girls to ride. The girls held back, afraid to mount either horses or chariots. If only somebody would ask him to ride! If only! But nobody knew he was there until he stumped his toe, fell sprawling, and the package holding the diamond ring flew out of his hands right close to the big, strong foot of a black stranger, who leaned and picked it up, then turned it over and over in his fingers, but when Bubba hopped up and reached for it, he put it in his pocket, a deep pants pocket under his faded blue overalls. Bubba's heart stood still.

"Dat package ain' my own. Dat's Aun' Nancy's package. I got to go home right now and take 'em to Aun' Nancy. I got to hurry home."

The man's black eyes looked friendly enough in spite of the broad grin on his face. "I heard you say you had come to get a diamond ring, but how-come you in such a haste, son? You ought to ride on de merry-go-round befo' you go."

"I ain't got no money to ride, suh."

"I'll gi' you a dime."

"Aun' Nancy said 'e would skin me if I much as look at de merry-go-round."

All the laughter left the man's eyes. They narrowed as his hand went deep down into his pocket again. "Who's you' Aun' Nancy?"

"She is de lady what's raisin' me."

"Whe' is you' Ma, son?"

"I dunno, suh."

"Whe' is you' Pa?"

"I dunno, suh."

"Well, what does you know?" The man laughed.

"I dunno, suh." Bubba felt too miserable for words. Tears blinded him, and his throat was tight and choky.

"Boy," the man laughed out loud, "you must be pure mindless. You don't know nuttin'. No wonder you' Ma was glad to leave you behind 'em. I don't believe you even know a merry-go-round is made for boys to ride on."

Bubba hung his head.

"Does you?"

"Yes, suh."

"You don't want to ride?"

"Yes, suh."

"Well, how-come you don' hop on 'em?"

"I ain't got no money, suh."

"De lady what's raisin' you wouldn' gi' you a dime?"

"No, suh."

"Well, me an' you better talk about dat."

The man cleared his throat. "Listen, sonny: I needs a diamond ring awful bad right now. I could get me a fine wife if I had one, and I been expectin' to buy me one soon as I could. You take dis ten cents and go ride on de merry-go-round whilst I examine dis ring. If it's a good one, I'll pay you all it's worth. If it ain' no good, an' I don' want 'em, you can wrap 'em back up and take 'em home. You look like a good boy to me, and I got faith in all what you tell me. So take dis dime and go ride. Pleasure you'self. Here's another nickel. Buy you'self a lemonade."

Bubba was too excited to think. The man had the ring. The two pieces of money were in his own hand. Wings took hold of his feet. No more stumbling or falling for them, and before he could halt them, they carried him toward the beat of the sharp, clear music; then they stepped up and got themselves into the stirrups, and Bubba was sitting astride a bay horse with his fingers trembling as they held to the red bridle rein. The horse began rocking under him, and the merry-go-round began circling. Faster and faster he went, round and round into a bouncing gallop. Never had he dreamed that any riding

could be so sweet or any music so soul-stirring. His head was dizzy, cold sweat drenched him, his heart beat with hard knocks inside his breast. Round and round he went, galloping, galloping to a tune of gay music which rang happily in his ears.

He had forgotten everything else on earth but the music and his horse and the saddle and bridle. But soon the swift riding began slowing; his horse's fast galloping slackened. A few more turns and they were still. The ride was over.

Where was that man? Where was Aunt Nancy's diamond ring? Night was here. The road toward home was as black as the fear in his heart.

Through the crowd he went, searching, searching, peering through the flickering light cast by the flambeaux encircling the merry-go-round. The horses and chariots were being filled again, and another journey was about to begin. Where was the man with the package? Bubba's eyes traveled fast, trying to see every soul who was riding. The man was not aboard. He was not among the gay bystanders. He was nowhere at all. He and the ring were gone. Bubba's heart opened and shut like a book. Nancy would skin him alive. If she did not kill him, he would have to go through life skinless. Terror crazed him. What must he do?

The boat was gone. Its black plume of smoke had broken and settled into a dark cloud over the river. The deck hands were singing in the distance, and their voices melted into the booming frog voices and sharp cricket notes. Fireflies sparkled in the low tree branches. The evening star blazed out. Bats sailed about in the sky. A pair of yoked oxen hitched to an empty cart chewed their cuds sleepily. Mules gnawed at the old trees to which they were tethered, then one stopped gnawing and, lifting his bony head, brayed long and sorrowfully.

A friendly chuckle fell close to Bubba's ear. A bony hand clutched his shoulder.

"What you cryin' 'bout, son? You ain' got no need to cry. Looka what I got for you." Uncle Chaw-tobacco was putting two green pieces of paper money into his hand.

"Dese is one-dollar bills. De gentleman what was a-talkin' to you told me to gi' 'em to you. He said he was takin' dat package wid him. He's a nice man. A fine man. He is one

o' dem boat hands, and he makes plenty of money every day."

Bubba squeezed the money tight in his hand. There was nothing to do but go home and get skinned.

Nancy was standing in the door, waiting for him, watching for him, and her angry voice met him before he even got near the doorstep.

"Great Gawd, Bubba! Whe' you been so long? How-come you is so lated? I was just about to go hunt you. Did you got de ring? Talk fast. Don' keep me waitin'."

"No'm, de ring ain' come." Bubba was almost too weak to stammer out the words.

"Ain' come? My Gawd! I wish I could kill dat gal Sue. I wonder how-come 'e disapp'int me like dis. Now I ain' got a piece o' ring to wear. Not a piece. Sue promised me 'e wouldn' fail to send me dat ring. 'E promised so faithful I had believe 'em. My Gawd, I'm too disapp'int. I could pure butt my head on the wall."

Her wailing voice rose higher and higher, shriller and shriller, and her shoulders shook with sobs.

Bubba could hardly believe his senses. Nancy thought his lie was the truth. Thank God! He felt sorry for her, yet his own relief was comforting. And there was the paper money in his pocket.

"Aun' Nancy, please don' cry. Please stop an' let me tell you something. I fetched you a present. A nice present."

Nancy's wailing stilled. Her red eyes glowed at the one-dollar bill he held out toward her.

"If you wouldn't cry, I'll gi' you dis dollar." Bubba held out one of the green dollar bills toward her.

"Whe'd you git dat money, Bubba?"

Bubba swallowed hard. He made his words speak out clear. "'At gentleman what was at de landing. He gi' 'em to me. He's a nice man, Aun' Nancy. Uncle Chaw-tobacco said he was a fine man."

"He must be a nice man for true," Nancy answered slowly, as her fingers smoothed out the crumpled money; then she folded it carefully and put it in her apron pocket.

"Did you git de washin' money?"

"Yes'm." Bubba handed her the kerchief with the hard knot of money tied in one corner.

Nancy untied the knot, counted the money—two quarters,

two dimes, one nickel; it was all there. "Here's a nickel, Bubba. I gi' you dis for bein' a good boy."

"Thank you kindly, Aun' Nan, you sho is good to me."

Her eyes measured him. Her fingers picked up a shining dime, then dropped it back into her palm. Slowly they picked it up again.

"Here's a dime, Bubba. It's a sin to gi' a boy money to waste, but I'm gwine to do it anyhow. To-morrow you go ride on de merry-go-round. Mind, now, don't you fall off and kill you'self."

"No, ma'am," Bubba promised joyfully, gratefully, and his feet began dancing boldly, cutting a happy little pigeon-wing step to the merry-go-round's music which rang out clearly in his heart.

The next two days passed quickly. Far too quickly. Bubba had ridden eleven times on the merry-go-round, and the green dollar bill had been spent along with the dime Nancy had given him. He had tried horses of every color, besides all the gold chariots, and he knew the merry-go-round tune by heart as well as he knew the spirituals which were sung at meeting. But he was not happy, for the time had come for Aunt Nancy's return. The boat had already blown for the landing and would soon be in sight, and his heart swelled up with fear until it felt likely to burst.

As the boat came chugging noisily around the bend of the river, for the tide held it back, sparks mixed with the smoke which poured out of the smokestack, bells jangled, the propeller churned the water as the great hulk eased sideways and stopped at the wharf.

Bubba felt low in his mind. What would Aunt Nancy do when she found out about the diamond ring?

This afternoon he had gone home and straightened up the house as well as he could, fed the fowls and milked the cow. Potatoes were banked in the ashes for supper. But he wished he had kept that green dollar bill to give to Aunt Nancy when she got on him with a stick.

The landing was crowded with people, but through them Bubba saw Nancy on the narrow gangplank coming ashore, and right behind her with her valise in one hand and her packages in the other was that man, that boat hand, who had taken the diamond ring and sent him those two green dollars.

"Hey, Bubba! How you do son?" Nancy called out cheerfully to him.

Bubba tried to answer her promptly, but his words were slow to come. He threaded his way through the crowd and stood humbly before her, holding up his mouth for her to kiss, then he nearly fell over, for his eyes caught the sparkle of a diamond ring on a finger of the plump hand she put on his shoulder.

"Meet you' new uncle, Bubba," Nancy cried out loud enough for everybody to hear her, then she laughed merrily at the silence her words caused.

"All o' yunnuh come meet my new husband," she added, looking at the crowd. "Me an' him was married no longer'n dis mornin', just befo' de boat left town. Look at him good, Bubba, an' tell me how you likes him."

"Who dat got married dis mornin'?" Uncle Chaw-tobacco shouted. "Not you, I hope, Miss Nancy. Can' be. Great Gawd, I is too disapp'int. I had aimed to marry you myse'f befo' long."

The people roared with laughter, then each man and woman stepped up and kissed the bride and shook the groom's hand and wished them both long lives and happiness.

In the midst of it all the groom leaned down and murmured in Bubba's ear.

"Don' fret 'about dat diamond ring, sonny. I know Miss Sue yonder to town. She was a witness at de weddin' dis mornin', an I gi' em fifty cents for de ring. It ain' been cost but a quarter to start wid. I told you I could git me a fine wife wid dat ring."

Bubba squeezed his hand until he leaned down again.

"Please, suh, don't let Aun' Nancy lick me," he pleaded.

"Lick who? Nobody ain' gwine lick nobody. Me an' you an' de bride is gwine now to take a ride on dat same merry-go-round befo' we goes home to-night. Come on, Nancy, gal. We got to celebrate de weddin' wid a ride. We is due to pleasure overselves a plenty to-day, by dis is us weddin' day."

"Sho," Nancy answered happily. "I'm pure ravin' to ride on dat merry-go-round. I hear say it's de sweetest ridin' ever was. But wait on me a minute till I show all dese gals de fine diamond ring what you give me."

And Bubba's heart beat softly again, as he watched Nancy

holding out her hand where the diamond ring sparkled bravely so that all the people might see it.

When all the hand-shaking and good-wishing were finally over, Nancy and her new husband climbed into a chariot on the merry-go-round and Bubba mounted a horse right in front of them. At first Nancy's cries of terror almost smothered her husband's low comforting words, but before long she laughed joyously as they whirled round and round.

Everything would have been perfect except for a heavy burden which weighted Bubba's heart down, in spite of the joy he felt. Nancy did not dream that the diamond ring came in the mail or that he had taken two green dollars for it.

He argued with himself; Nancy was happy, her husband was happy, the diamond ring was on her finger, why not let things stay as they were? Why make trouble for himself?

His misery stung him like a thorn in his breast. He might be a fool to do it, but he would have to tell Nancy the truth or he would never feel peaceful again. He walked homeward behind the newly wed couple and with every step his unhappiness grew. When must he speak? How could he make his tongue talk, dry as it was?

Ahead of him in the dusk he could see the Praise House with its white-washed front, gleaming. When he got in front of it, then he would speak out; he would face the worst, whatever that was.

He did try to. He cleared his throat, grunted, called out: "Aun' Nancy, please wait a minute. I got to tell you something."

But he got no further, for Nancy broke into a great peal of laughter.

"Lawd, Bubba, I didn' know you was dat scared of de graveyard. Come on an' hold my hand till we get past de Praise House. L'Boy, you hand is cold as ice an' tremblin' like a leaf."

Her hand which took his was hot and wet, and the ring on it pressed against his fingers. His feet slackened their gait, then stopped dead still.

"What de matter ail you, Bubba? Is you sick? I hope to Gawd you ain' seen no spirit a-walkin' in dis graveyard. Hurry up an' talk."

"I got de ring from de post-office. It been come on de boat.

I had aim to fetch 'em home to you, but I been fall down—" His breath gave out; sobs shook his words to pieces.

"What ring is you talk 'bout, Bubba? Hush you cryin' befo' I pop you on de jaw."

Then the new husband spoke up. "Don' talk hard at de boy, Nancy. He is a nice lil' boy an' he ain' done a thing wrong. I is de one, not him."

Bubba's heart beat so loud and so fast he could not hear the rest of the man's words, but he did hear Nancy's happy laugh at the end of them, and he felt her warm lips giving his cheek a loud smack, and heard them say close to his ear:

"Don' fret bout de ring, son. If it wasn't for you a-droppin' 'em, I might not a got me dis fine husband. I might a had to married Uncle Chaw-tobacco to keep from bein' a old maid."

The husband laughed gaily. "Who? You? You a old maid? Never in dis world. Not sweet an' pretty as you is. Ain't it so, Bubba?"

"It sho is," Bubba answered, then he wiped his tears away on his shirt sleeve.

LOBSTER JOHN'S ANNIE

BY FLORENCE RYERSON AND COLIN CLEMENTS

FROM *Stratford Magazine*

FLORENCE RYERSON AND COLIN CLEMENTS

are Californians who take Terminal Island near San Pedro as the real background for their story, which is a series of three that have appeared in the STRATFORD MAGAZINE. *Mr. and Mrs. Clements have succeeded in doing something different from the machine-made story.*

IT WAS late afternoon when Joan and Roddie left their play and started down the curving beach toward Lobster John's. The sun was low and the shadow of Dead Man's Island lay purple-blue across the water, but the Rattlesnake was still in full light and the surf that worried eternally at the base of Gull Rock flashed white, then blue, then white again.

The tide was low and Joan zigzagged a hundred feet from the silver line of warm dry sand, across gray dampness to the lazy wash of the sea. Last night's high water had traced its outline in garlands of kelp and shell. The kelp was still damp, shading from brown-black to amber, with patches of coral and jade. The shells were dry and soberly white or gray, but if you looked closely you saw there were rainbows imprisoned in their curves

As she walked, Joan gathered treasures until the pocket of her gingham dress hung damp and hard against her leg; then she slipped one arm from the sleeve of her sweater, twisted the cuff into a knot, and began dropping the moss and shell through the frayed armhole.

Farther out, ankle deep in water, Roddie was running his fingers through the sand in search of crabs. As he caught them he pressed their shells with thumb and finger. If they cracked he sent them through the air in a swift curve to the churning surf; if they held he dropped them into a tea can under his arm and sung their number triumphantly to Joan.

The stretch of beach narrowed, shelved upward, and ran into the breakwater where a smother of surf fought to madness against black pilings, and crazy currents tore at jagged rock. Joan and Roddie searched the sandy crevices for starfish and abalone before they climbed the crest of the Rattlesnake and started along the line of splintered planking toward Dead Man's.

To the left, the sea chafed and pounded against the bulkhead, sending up little fans of silver spray. To the right, a ragged line of huts clung to the broken rock like stranded

heaps of wreckage. Lobster John's was the farthest to seaward, a quarter mile from its nearest neighbor. It was a shanty of sun-bleached planking, calked with oakum and thatched with blowsy marsh grass. From the seaward side its door was half hidden by a clump of tortured cypress, but, seen from the channel, it was like a water spider reared upon thin legs above the tide.

Lobster John was away. Joan knew at once because his boat was not moored at its rusty buoy and there was no dinghy bumping the drunken steps that descended from the rear door of the hut to the water below.

Joan was glad he was gone. There was something terrifying about Lobster John. Even when she had not seen him for days he would jump into her mind and stay there until she put him out, deliberately, as one puts a cat out of doors.

It wasn't Lobster John himself that frightened her, but his hand, which wasn't a hand at all, but a hook fastened on at the wrist with a little harness of water-stained leather. Joan always decided she wouldn't look at the hook this time. It wasn't necessary, really. Lots of people did things for you, like weighing out sugar or potatoes at the store, and you came away without remembering their hands. But after Lobster John had weighed out a purchase she remembered, sometimes for days, the way his left hand looked . . . all brown and wrinkled, with patches of dried skin peeling off the back. And how strange it seemed, with no other hand to help it, only the hook which was black at the base, but worn quite shiny in the curve and at the point. It was the hook she remembered after she was in bed at night. How it showed below the tattered fringe of black jersey sleeve. How it flashed in the sunlight, and the way it shot out and caught back a lobster that was escaping from the trap.

Yes, decidedly, Joan was glad Lobster John was out fishing and that she would see Lobster John's Annie alone.

She was called Lobster John's Annie to distinguish her from Chang's Annie who had married a Chink and gone to live in a houseboat, and Mike's Annie who was too young to marry, so cooked for her father and mended his nets.

Chang's Annie was old and twisted, with a blotch of livid red on her cheek that stretched up to her hair. It was a birthmark and the reason she had gone to live with a Chink. No

other man would have her. Joan and Roddie had learned that from one of the women at Young Tony's funeral, and were punished at home for repeating it. Also, they were ordered to stay away from the Rattlesnake and the fisherfolk except such times as they were sent to Lobster John's.

Mike's Annie was not yet twelve and came to scnool when her father was too drunk to notice. Her eyes were green and her mouth hung loose and open, like a sea anemone at low tide. Joan hated to look at Mike's Annie.

But Lobster John's Annie was beautiful. Her eyes were deep blue with green lights. Her skin was tan on the cheeks and neck where the sun had struck, but her forehead, under the shadow of her hair, was the pink-white of a shell. The hair itself was a strange dark red, threaded with strands of gold. Week days she wore it in plaits over her shoulder because it was too heavy for pins, but on Sundays she twisted it up about her head and sometimes, when Lobster John had gone to the mainland, there were flowers above her ears.

Joan knew that Lobster John's Annie was beautiful because her eyes told her so, and because the grown-ups at home argued about her at the table. They were always disagreeing in their strange, adult fashion about the color of her eyes, the shade of her skin or, more often, about the length of her hair and whether, if it were unplaited, it would reach to her knees. Their talk was interlarded with strange names. Burne-Jones. Botticelli. Rossetti. And frequently they spoke of blue velvet and the *moyen âge*.

Joan didn't talk about Lobster John's Annie. She only knew that she liked to look at her, and so did Roddie . . . and Basil Kent. Basil was a painter from Paris. Except for the fishermen, everyone in Joan's small world painted, unless they wrote things or played the piano. Basil was very young and slender, with brown hair and a quick, gentle way of laughing. Joan liked him and was glad that he was visiting Lobster John's Annie.

She knew he was there because his folding easel and paint box were outside the house. A fishnet had been thrown over them but the wind had blown part of it away and she could see the shiny black tin through the meshes of faded cord.

Joan was not surprised. She had seen Basil watching Annie as she passed on her way to church, the sea wind whipping her

skirts back so that her body, bent against the blast, was all one lovely curve. And he had been still watching when she passed again on her way home.

"Basil's here," Joan told Roddie happily, and knocked upon the door.

When Lobster John was at home he always answered the door himself, standing dourly across the threshold, legs spread, arms akimbo, as though shielding the room within. When you stated your business . . . ("Three lobsters, please, and Mother says big ones.") . . . he came out, closing the door behind him, and walked along the little gallery that overhung the water to the tank at the back where innumerable lobsters half swam, half crawled over the slimy bottom.

You chose the largest and he dropped them, green-black and wriggling, into a pot that boiled over an oil stove. Joan always turned away and thought, quite firmly, about something else, but Roddie stood by the stove and watched the iron hook shoving the tortured creatures under the boiling water.

Then, when the water had ceased to lap against the sides of the pot and the lobsters were all red and shiny, like little scarlet dragons, Lobster John weighed them, wrapped them in old newspapers, and made change, all without entering the house. It was as though he did not want anyone but himself to see Annie. As though he was standing between her and the world.

But when he was away, Lobster John's Annie invited you into the single room with its rough furniture and rugs of sewed rags. She let you look at the carved shells her father, the Captain, had brought from the South Seas, the model of his ship (very small and perfect to the last bit of sail and rigging), the Chinese tray with flowers of inlaid pearl, and her picture, in a white Confirmation dress and veil. It was taken before she married Lobster John.

Joan was thinking of that picture as she knocked on the door. Of the way the pictured Annie looked out from under the veil, and the way she was smiling. Lobster John's Annie didn't smile now. At least, not often, and never like that.

There was no answer to Joan's knock and Roddie began pounding on the side of the house where the gallery clung to the wall of rough boards. They knew Annie was within. Her hat and the torn blue shawl which she always wore to the

stores were hanging on a limb of the cypress. And Basil must be there, too. Here was his painting gear. . . .

Perhaps they were asleep, Roddie suggested, or perhaps they were hiding. Basil often played with them; tag on the beaches, or hide-and-seek among the dunes in the long silver stretches of twilight. Perhaps he and Annie were waiting to be found.

Joan left the front door and the two trotted around to the porch at the back which overhung the water. The tide was at such low ebb that they could see the bare bones of the channel beneath them, muddy and foul, with old tin cans and heaps of rotting refuse that sheltered schools of tiny, darting fish. The water was very quiet and only a faint pat-patting came from the rocks where the damp seaweed dripped into shell-encrusted pools.

The house was quiet, too, and when Joan had pounded on the back door she climbed on the edge of the lobster vat and looked into the window which was high and misted with the spray that blew in from the sea.

That was the only time she ever saw Lobster John's Annie with her hair unplaited. It was flowing down from her head like a mantle of molten copper, cloaking her body so that only one shoulder showed. The shoulder was bare and looked strangely white against the background of red-gold hair.

"Does it come to her knees?" Roddie was climbing beside Joan and caught at her arm as the box gave way and tumbled them into the pile of fishnets, broken oars, and wooden traps that littered the porch. They upset the boiler and it crashed to the ground with a clang of metal and splash of water that brought Lobster John's Annie to the crack of the door.

She told them they must go away. Her husband had taken all the lobsters to the mainland. They must go away. The lobsters in the vat were old. No good. They must go away, and come back to-morrow . . . the next day. . . .

Joan and Roddie returned along the Rattlesnake, sulking a bit because Lobster John's Annie hadn't asked them in, and because Basil hadn't answered when they called.

It was sunset and the canyons upon Long Tom were turning from gray to purple-pink, the color of the verbenas that

carpeted the farther reaches of the dunes. The wind had dropped and the fishing fleet was returning slowly, sails hanging limp, little flashes of silver light showing along the oars as they broke the smooth water.

Lobster John hadn't gone to the mainland, after all. Joan knew his boat, a low-built smack with lateen sails of rusty red. It had belonged to Old Chris before Tony knifed him in a quarrel over the fishing ground at Dead Man's, and Lobster John had taken it over with the shanty at the end of the Rattlesnake. It was in the lead now, and Joan could see him sculling with uncanny skill, the handle of the oar held firmly, horribly, in the curve of his hook.

He was headed for the cannery wharf and the stores where the men stopped for tobacco and whiskey before going home. The stores were forbidden, but if Joan and Roddie ran they might catch him on the wharf and see if there were lobsters in his boat. The way was long and full of pitfalls where the top of the bulkhead had rotted and fallen into the sea. There were barriers of wind-blown cypress and of kelp, but they ran doggedly, scrambling over the rocks and through the sand, in a short-cut that led to the wharf.

Lobster John had moored his boat and was climbing up from the float on a board with cross cleats that served as a stair. The tide was turning toward the flow and the slap-slap of incoming waves was mixed with the boom of his footsteps on the soft, damp wood.

He had been gutting albacore and his rusty jersey, worn at the neck and elbows into tatters of frowsy wool, was slimed with silver scales. There were scales on his trousers, too. They flecked his beard and clung to the sticky red-brown blood that stained his hand and the point of his hook.

The mingled smells of fish and tobacco, of blood and sweat, sickened Joan, but it was too late to turn back. She moved closer to Roddie and took his hand. Together they asked, quite bravely, for lobsters.

Lobster John shook his head. He hadn't been out to his pots all day. Nor to the mainland, neither. Albacore running too thick. But he had lobsters at home . . . plenty of 'em. Big fellows, too.

"We've been there," Joan told him. "Annie said they weren't for sale."

"She wouldn't come out," Roddie complained. "An' Basil wouldn't, either."

Lobster John stared at that, his black brows coming together in a frown that startled them into sudden loquacity. They told him about Annie . . . about Basil . . . their words running together in a little wailing chorus of injury. Before they were through he had turned and was striding up the wharf. They followed, pattering behind, still airing their grievance with raised voices. From the top of the Rattlesnake they could see him like a monstrous ape jumping across the broken pilings, swinging from rock to rock, and saving himself from falling by the sharp point of his hook.

Suddenly they realized that the sun had set and it was dark and very cold. Still hand in hand, they turned and started running, running along the beach where the damp sand seemed to catch at their feet and hold them for that shadowy enemy who was somewhere . . . behind . . . in the dusk.

Basil reached home before them, but they could not see him because they were late and dirty and in disgrace for strange grown-up reasons which they did not pretend to understand. They had to do with an octopus in Roddie's pocket . . . (only a baby one), Joan's wet shoes, and the sleeve of her sweater. It was not until supper that Joan saw Basil and asked him the question which was burning her tongue.

About Lobster John's Annie. When her hair was unbraided did it really come to the floor . . . or only to her knees?

There was silence at that, with the fire crackling loudly on the hearth and everyone, fork suspended, staring at Joan . . . then at Basil . . . then at Joan again. Roddie's thin, shrill voice pierced the silence.

"Next time she lets it down for you make her stand up an' measure. We couldn't really see from the window. . . ."

It was bed without supper, and no talking from room to room; not even explanations. There were things that children could not understand. Only, it was wrong to look into windows and wrong to talk at the table and Joan and Roddie were to keep away from Lobster John and from Lobster John's Annie. They were never to mention them, *never*, not to each other, to Mother, to Father, nor to Basil. Most especially to Basil.

They had no chance to mention anything to Basil because

by morning he had decided to visit Uncle Ned who was a bachelor and lived all alone, beyond the farthest dunes. And a week later Joan was wakened by the sound of a bell on the beach. There were often bells at night, after a storm, or when fishermen where drowned. Joan knew, without any particular emotion, that it meant a search-party was out with lanterns, looking for the body which would presently be thrown up by the tide.

Roddie wakened, too, and they sat, wrapped in blankets, on the window seat. A thin crescent of moon hung over the peak of Long Tom but it seemed pale and futile compared with the lights which passed and re-passed, stopping now and then, in little glowing groups, like friendly fireflies, then dancing on again up the dark curve of the beach.

The sound of the bell was pleasant and Joan, warm and happy, hoped they wouldn't find the body until morning so that she and Roddie could sit there all night. It was fun to be watching from this upper window, listening to the bell, and wondering who was dead. It must be someone they knew: they knew everyone on the island. She hoped it was Snark Johnson who beat his wife, or Old Mike or one of the Japs.

"Maybe it's Lobster John," said Joan, and giggled suddenly. "Maybe he fell off Gull Rock."

"Yes, maybe," agreed Roddie drowsily. They had been fishing all afternoon in the shadow of Dead Man's and had glimpsed something vaguely puzzling on Gull Rock. "Maybe Lobster John's Annie got mad at him for cutting her hair an' pushed him off."

"Sh-h-h!" This from Joan. "We aren't to talk about them, *ever*." She giggled again. "All the same, I hope it's him."

But it wasn't Lobster John who was drowned. It was Basil. His painting gear had been found on Gull Rock and his hat. In setting up his easel he must have stepped too close to the edge and fallen into the sea. It was strange that he should have drowned because he was a splendid swimmer, but perhaps he struck against a submerged rock. His face, when the body drifted onto the beach a week later, was horribly battered and torn. . . .

The grown-ups discussed it at supper, forgetting, in their excitement, the presence of Joan and Roddie. As their babble

passed over her head Joan's mind was working back, back through the infinity of a week of play to that afternoon when Basil disappeared, and suddenly she remembered something. She and Roddie had been near Gull Rock for hours that day and they had seen nothing of Basil. They had seen no one except Lobster John and Lobster John's Annie who was crying because he had cut her hair.

Joan opened her mouth to speak, then she caught Roddie's eyes, round and blue, fixed upon her warningly. He was remembering the night they were sent to bed for talking of things they didn't understand.

Joan remembered, too. The words died unspoken. She went silently on with her supper.

CONJUH

BY WILBUR DANIEL STEELE

FROM *Pictorial Review*

WILBUR DANIEL STEELE

has appeared many times in the O. Henry Memorial volumes. In fact in any survey of the short story during the last decade, his stories would be outstanding for their originality, their vigor, and their splendid craftsmanship. He is also the author of the novel, "Meat."

THE woman walked the road from Adams Run toward Edisto Island. It was a long way, but she made it a longer. There was a look of fixed confusion on her thin face and in her enlarged eyes. Whenever she heard hoof-beats or footfalls on the road-dust she stopped, and appeared to brace herself to await the passer-by with an air of unconcern. But then it was no use. Swerving pusillanimously, like a sick animal, she broke into the roadside tangle and made on so for a little way.

It can be hot in May in the low-country parishes of South Carolina. Here in the magnolia-towered thickets of beech and bay and thorn-vines it was dead hot. Yet the woman continued to shiver from head to foot of her slender height, as if it were cold. In the open she walked, but here where it was no longer easy, perhaps because it *was* so hard, she tried to run, tried in her panic to fight it. Once, caught in the cul-de-sac of a bamboo-brake, she brought up and put her palms to her temples sharply. She stared around her, and as if but just awakened, the whites of her eyes increased. She began to pant heavily.

"What am I doing here?" Her next words were in a blurry French. "*Quelle bêtise!*"

She started back for the opening in the brake by which she had entered. After she had taken three steps a spasm of coughing seized her and shook her light body terribly. She put a handkerchief to her mouth to try to muffle it. When she took it away and looked at the arterial crimson staining the fold she had bitten she wheeled, threw herself in renewed panic against the thick of the bamboos, broke through, and ran on.

When she had slipped down from the train at the little stop back there, in the maze of a moment of hysteria in which the names of these almost-forgotten Sea Islands had seemed an imperious beckoning, the woman had been well, if quietly, clothed. By the time Bram Tollum saw her, caught without chance of hiding on the road-fill going over to the first of the islands, mud-plastered to her knees, dress torn by a hundred

thorns, and her hair beginning to look kinky again in its dusty disorder, she made a figure nearly as ragamuffin as one of the native Gullah girls after a day in the wood-lots.

Bram Tollum had buried his woman at the Pilkee ground over near Adams Run, and now he was bringing home the mourners, most of them females, packed narrowly in the body of the "nigger-house yard" truck.

When he passed the cinnamon-skinned stranger perched nervously on the edge of the fill he shouted the conventional "Ebenin'!" and would have gone on full-throttle for the rise to the bridge had it not been that he let his eye drag a little in leaving the shape of the wayfarer. Then, because he was alive and bereaved, and because the shape was of a queer, uncommon loveliness, he stopped the truck with a jar that flung his load about, threw in the reverse, and backed back.

The woman was caught. Here there was no cover to hide her from this suddenly leveled curiosity of eleven pairs of eyes. Again, like one shaken awake, she asked herself what she was doing in this place. "It's like an awful dream you can't get out of."

The sense of nightmare increased. Bram's head, twisted around on its glossy, powerful neck, broad-jowled, narrow-browed, the whites of the little eyes showing brown around the circumferences—of all the faces in the truck now this was the only one she could see. But when the mouth in it opened and spoke, the sense of nightmare went away.

"Ebenin', Sistuh. Where you gwine to, foot in yuh hand? Mek-so you gwine Appleton Road, gibb you a lift; glad habb yuh company."

It was less the meaning than the music of the words, uttered in that forgotten speech of the Gullahs of the Sea Islands, that affected the woman so powerfully. She had parted her lips for a "No—thanks" quickly, but then before she could utter it, it was as if the shape of her mouth had changed. She felt the muscles of her throat flexing like old rusty springs let go, and heard herself answering in a soft, flat-voweled, eager rush:

"T'anky, dat puhzackly where I duh gwine, Brudduh. I gwine Appleton House, in de nigguh-house yard, an' t'anky *too* much fuh gibb me a lift."

Venus Burley, relegated to the truck-bed to make room

for the newcomer on the seat, up beside the widower, was furious.

The big house at the Appleton plantation burned down thirty years ago, leaving only a pair of chimneys to stand in the live-oak avenue. Part of the cotton-lands have gone back to jungle; those that are left in tillage, on account of the weevil these times, are planted in corn, spinach, potatoes, and other truck, each field after the whim of its negro tenant-cultivator. The only part of the plantation that has kept a color of animation about it is the row of cabins where these black inheritors live, once the slave-quarters, now the "nigger-house yard."

Near sundown the shadows of the cabins, all alike, stripe the sole-packed "street" before them tigerwise, and, going down over the brambly bank beyond it, ray away longer and longer across the tide-marsh toward the lift of the barrier beach and the pinky-white lace of the Atlantic combers. Marshward, herons beat their wings in heavy flight; inland the bullbats are waking. The sea-wind, beginning to die, blows strong and salt one moment and slacks another, and in the instant of its slacking it is pushed back by the land-air, in which are mingled the smoke of piny lightwood from the decapitated chimneys and the scent of trees in flower—magnolia, rose of Sharon, and sweet-bay.

Bloom Manigo sat on her door-sill and watched the house-shadows pulling themselves out long and thin across the marsh-grass, trying for another millionth time to grab the yellow beach-sand a mile away with their finger-tips before the dusk grabbed *them* and smothered them in the bigger shadow. Bloom knew they never could. She knew a great deal. She was a woman who had had more children than she could easily remember, and so it was a pity, now she was old, the only one left her was the baby, Sukey, a girl not yet eleven and of little use in the potato-fields.

Her son Vulcan, her "man chillun," had been dead eight months now; the last of the year's hog was finished months ago; and since one can borrow "bittles" for a while but not forever from even the kindest of neighbors, the pot that little Sukey was rattling in the chimney inside held no more to-night than a thrice-boiled rind, a handful of cow-peas, and

another of corn-hominy. To-morrow it would hold less; and Bloom was a woman who had been sleek and fat in her day. So the mumbly song she kept going in her throat as she rocked over her elbows and watched the shadows reaching for the golden sands they could never reach this side of death, was a sad one.

> . . . An' I look on de road, an' de road so lonesome;
> Lawd, I gots to walk dat lonesome road. . . .

The racket of the truck's arrival with the mourners from Bram's woman's funeral fell in with the melancholy of the spiritual without Bloom's being otherwise aware of it.

> An' I look in de grabe, an' de grabe so wat'ry;
> Lawd, I gots to lay in dat wat'ry grabe. . . .

But then one woman, Venus Burley, came running, elbows speared, eyes snapping.

"Aunty Bloom, here come a punkin-skin woman duh say 'e yoh chillun. You ain't habb no punkin-skin gal foh chillun, duh call-umself Delia, gwine away N'Yawk when 'e little. 'E a liar, enty?"

Bloom stopped rocking. "Me habb a chillun duh call um-self Delia? Le'me see. Foh gal-chillun dey Silbia an' *lilly* Bloom an' Promise, an' dey Magnolia an'—an' dey Sukey——"

"Yi-yi-yi! 'E a Gawd liar, a *Gawd* liar, enty? I tell 'um 'e a Gawd liar."

But now Bloom was looking at the cinnamon-skinned stranger who had come up behind Venus, and when she saw she was a woman grown, and so fit for field-work, her memory was revivified and she knew her own child.

"*An' dey my-own Delia!*" Heaving up from the sill, Bloom spread her arms. Tears sprang from her eyes and tumbled down her cheeks. Having done its work of prompting, the material consideration was gone as soon as come, without trace or shame, leaving in the simple old woman's heart only the power and wonder of pure mother-love. "Delia chile, t'ank de Lawd Maussa! t'ank de Lawd Jedus! you binna gwine away North wid dem n' Yankee Bukra foh nurse-maid, but you done come home to you-own home see yuh maamy befoh 'e dead."

Delia Manigo stood still, not vacillating, but as though her arms were pinioned and her ankles bound. As Bloom studied her the flood of the mother's tears increased. But now they were lustrous things, precious as nothing else to the old country negro's heart.

"Chile, you dress-up too good. Chile, you gots sin." Nor was there anything illogical in the ecstasy of the sobbing outcry with which she finished: "Praise be to de Lawd!"

"Me, Maamy?" Delia's mouth fell open. "*Me* gots sin?"

Delia looked around her. She looked at the marsh and the striping shadows, the sandy reef beyond it, the breakers still beyond, changing from wink to wink, yet in fourteen years not changed. She looked at the birds moving on the sky, the same great heron, the same fish-hawk hung tiny in solitude, the painted streak of a nonpareil, in and out.

She looked at the little cabins and saw them growing big, and the wall of the palmetto-tops behind them gigantic. She looked at the dark half-circle of the faces of the curious hemming her in.

It was as if her eyes, heavy for so long with her weird, intoxicated dream, were opened clear, and of a sudden she knew them all, these of her flesh and blood and kind. Of a sudden she knew no one else and nothing else.

Had she sin? She could have laughed aloud. Could these but have envisaged the half, the very hundredth, of her sin's fantastic magnitude. But in the same instant she herself was stricken by the terror of it, and tears began to tumble down her face too.

"Maamy—yessum—I gots it. Maamy, I gots a hebby sin."

Bloom caught the flinging body. "Glory Gawd! Yuh ol' maamy gwine fohgibb you an' tek cyar uh you, an' Jedus sabe yoh soul."

"Maa-a-a-amy! I'ze uh ailin'. I'ze agwine dead."

"No, no, no; hush yuh cryin', rest yuh trimblin'; you tired, dat all; spang tired out. Come-yere in de house and lay 'pon-top yuh maamy's bed."

Delia slept. After a time she was awakened to take some food, fat hog meat and plenty of hominy with the gravy over it. (Now that labor had come into the house, old Bloom had been able to fill her pan at neighbors' doorways without trouble or shame.) Delia tried to eat of these strange, but less

strange than familiar, "bittles," and though she could swallow nothing, made a drowsy show of smacking her lips.

Heavy with sleep and with fever, her one desire was to be let lie unaroused, part and parcel of this tiny, ember-lit room, child and never anything but child of it—the browning newpapered walls, the mud chimney with its medicine bottles, and broken Staffordshire treasured in niches, and black pots nesting in the ashes, and Sister Sukey's eyes from the dark of a corner, white-rimmed with awe, and Maamy's big shadow moving softly, like an over-curving black wing.

But once recollection passed like a knife through Delia's brain. She sat bolt up.

"They're after me. Ohhh! They've found out by now; they're after me."

Sukey's eyes grew whiter. Maamy's big brown mouth fell open.

"Where you learn talk Bukra talk lukkah dat, Chile? Dat too swongah." Here were dimensions of sin of a sudden beyond the old Gullah woman's powers to deal with, even perhaps beyond her stern "God's" and her kindly "Jedus's." She let misgiving shake her for a moment.

"Who-all duh aftuh you? Chile, wha'—wha'—wha' kinda sin you binna dare fuh do?"

Everything was twisted and magnified by Delia's fever. Mumbling in her bosom with distracted fingers, she brought to the firelight a pouch made of some soft skin, hung by a ribbon around her neck. Before she could do more her mother had wheeled on Sukey, crying: "Git outa yere; git out t'rough dat door an' shut-um behine you an' shut yuh mout' sametime an' *keep-um* shut!" Not till the scared child had obeyed did Bloom move, and then it was quickly, her thick fingers pulling open the mouth of the bag. When she saw that it was full of the sparkle of diamonds and things she began to shiver and groan.

"Gawd habb pity! Dat whuffoh you so trimbly; you duh t'ief, duh t'ief, duh t'ief."

"No, no!" Appalled, bewildered, Delia scrambled back for refuge into the Island speech. "I nebbuh t'ief-um; I nebbuh, I sway-to-Gawd. Dey my my-own. Um gibb-um to me, ebery las' one, Maamy. Maa-a-amy!"

Bloom's mirth came out of her fright, cackling. She caught

a bight of necklace out of the pouch. "Who duh gibb you dat t'ing?" Shrill sarcasm. "Huh—huh—huh! Must be a stingy nigguh tek a wench to de crossroads store fuh buy-um sucha poor lilly present no more-na *dat* t'ing." Poking, she chose a bauble of platinum, a six-pointed star with one great brilliant. "Chile, tell yuh maamy, *who gwine gibb a nigguh-gal dat t'ing?*"

"A king, Maamy—he gibb-um."

"A king! Hi—hi! Whuffoh? Wha' kind uh king?"

"Fuh a dec'ration he gibb-um, Maamy. A honest-to-Jedus white-folks' *king*."

Bloom strained for words fit for her ultimate sarcasm, her cheeks swollen with her breath, eyeballs pressed out against their lids. But Delia, staring around her in panic, cowed not by her mother's incredulity, but by the sudden onsweep now of her own, buried her face in her hands. "I guess I mussuh t'ief-um. I yent but a poor lilly nigguh-gal, fuh work in de potato-field 'pon-top uh Edisto; I *done mussuh* t'ief-um an' dat so."

The cough that was always waiting to catch her when her guard was down caught her and shook her to pieces. At sight of the cruelty, everything else was swept clear away out of Bloom, leaving nothing but the mother of mothers. She put her arms around the bucking body, held it fiercely against the large, soft warmth of her breast, moaning, crooning.

"Don' you bodduh, my baby. Yuh maamy gots you in 'e arm, an' 'e gwine tek cyar uh you. Gi'me dat skin-bag, an' don' you t'ink no more. To-night I gwine hide-um unduh de loose board in-unduh de bed; to-morruh I gwine t'row-um in de marsh, where no-Gawd-body alibe ebbuh duh find-um. Stop yuh twistin' an' twinin' now; hush yuh cryin'; listen de wind duh blow in de chinaberry-leaf out dey, so sof', so kind. You want yuh rest; you want yuh sleepy, sleepy sleep, safe where nobody cyan touch you in yuh maamy arm."

Delia slept. For hours it was the black sleep, untroubled. But toward the gray of morning she dreamed.

She walked rapidly, then she began to run, across the shiny floor of her apartment toward the escape of the tall glass doors. But no matter how skitteringly her feet fled, the soft fall of pliant shoe-soles behind her she could not shake off. And when she had slipped out upon the iron balcony and would

have pulled the door shut behind her, one of those soles was intruded to block it, and the face of Monsieur le Médicin hung in the aperture, the silky pendant of his whisker making his face seem even longer, his brown eyes nearly black with imploration and concern.

"*Mademoiselle, je répète*——"

There she turned on him, all-let-go, her blurred French blurrier than ever with the ecstasy of her revolt. "You repeat, you repeat, you repeat. I'm to stop all working, go away from Paris, eat this, drink that, sleep so and so. Or else I will to be grave sick and die. But can you not hear me when *I* repeat, that it is equal to me, and that, the devil, what do I care? The devil! who is there that cares?"

"But your world, Mademoiselle Manigault! Your art, your public, your Paris!"

But now she twisted quickly from him.

"Look, Doctor! No, down there! There, where I point. It goes there."

And now, in the queer way of dreams, it seemed that for a long while she had been doing nothing but point at a thing below her in the current of the Champs Élysées that she could see, yet dared not see. Like one of those liver-spots that race out of the corner of vision and return to re-escape and are never done with it, time after time this dread-spot in her dream ran past beneath her and away up the river of holiday cars bound out toward the races, the woods, and all the tryst-ing-places of happiness.

"Look where I'm pointing, Foster!" (For, by a dream-trick, it was no longer the doctor's face beside her, but somehow the face of Foster Lake, the manager.)

"Look, for heaven's sake, Jacques!" (It was somehow Jacques Monck of *Le Matin*.)

Her voice rose to a thready scream: "*Look, Édouard!*"

For now it was Édouard Lebrun himself, there at her shoulder, an unwonted flush on his olive cheeks, his eyes queer, his full mouth tightened and oddly twisted. But when she would have grasped his arm with one hand to make him see where the other was pointing, she grasped at nothing but a thing that dissolved and left emptiness and sudden mockery.

And as suddenly, as if her pursuing finger had been given power, the thing that fled was pinned down, and she saw it.

An open car (for the day was sunny), mahogany and nickel and crimson leather, and Édouard Lebrun there in it, his face averted from this building, and by his side, snow and gold and happy, Olga Pedesen, the Norse girl, of the Folies Bergères.

Delia laid hold of the curly iron of the balustrade to twist it and shiver it. But that too dissolved under her touch, and so did the floor of the balcony, and the floor of Paris, and where she fell in a heap she lay and gnawed at her lips and sobbed. And sobbing, she awoke, and saw darkness bending over her, with grayness around its edges.

"Dey, dey, dey, Chile; dey, dey, dey, my baby."

Reality. The land-air was still blowing, heavy with tangled fragrances—myrtle and bay, honeysuckle and dogwood, cows and pigs, raccoon and deer, wood-smoke and harness-sweat and axle-grease. Bird-song ran around the cabin chinks like the shadow of a baton across invisible reeds and violins. There were other stirrings, husky laughter, pad of bare soles. Reality, generations fixed. After the fantasm of a moment's sleep.

Bloom left the bedside and went to the door; around her the gray light warmed.

"Dayclean," she said. "Time de man duh git on de crop, befoh de crow duh git on-um. Mawnin', Haklus. I do lubb see you wid a hoe 'pon-top yoh shoulder. Mawnin', Madlun." At sound of Delia squeaking up and dropping her feet to the floor, the material and the maternal in Bloom closed in momentary struggle. But the mother conquered. "You lay quiet, Delia chile. To-morruh you feel more bettuh; mebby we find some work in de crop foh you work. But you ain' had yuh rest yet. Lay quiet 'pon-top yuh back to-day."

Delia started to cry, "No, I'm all right; I had all the rest I want—"; then, startled by the anomaly of that speech in this place, she did as she had done yesterday and slid back into the Gullah in haste. "I wanta gwine out, work in de crop, dis bery mawnin'."

"We ain't habb no crop uh we-own dis summuh, Delia, neiduh-so no mule, neiduh-so no cow foh work. But *ef* you do *do* wanta work I binna habb a compersation with Bram Tollum las' night, an' Bram he gots a hebby potato-field dis summuh, an' he lubb habb a help."

"I don' cyare who-wid I gwine, Maamy, I *duh* gwine, an' I duh gwine now."

If there seemed reality inside, there seemed a deeper and more vivid reality out between sky and land. This illusion of reality held Delia prisoner. As she walked behind Bram's broad back along the cart-track, through the light of morning, through the myrtle-thickets, through the little pine-woods, it seemed that weariness and fright of death had been stripped from her like the winding-sheet left in the tomb in the garden, never to be put on again. It was less a feeling of well-being than a feeling of no feeling at all—resurrection morning, her sins forgiven and her soul set free.

Nothing weighed. She felt only a kind of Elysian levity when Bram, turning suddenly in the half-light of the pine-woods, asked her to give him a kiss.

"Me gibb *you* a kiss!" she stood and tittered. "A oagly black 'rangatang luk *you!*" She hadn't to search for them; immemorial epithets fit for such dealings ran off her tongue. "You stand too-much lukkuh elephunt an' a alligatuh an' a 'rangatang, all t'ree, an' I is a puhticulah lady, nigguh, an' you cyan't specify."

But when, come to the foot of his field, heavy with her taunts and his three-day widowerhood, he renewed his suit, his face contorted and the huge wedges of his chest-muscles tensed with his vehemence, Delia felt a chill of misgiving and a thrill of rage.

"What I come here foh, hoe weed an' crabgrass, or listen to field-nigguh sweetmout' all mawnin'?"

"I *ain't* talk sweetmout'. My todduh woman, 'e dead; I lubb habb you fuh my woman."

Delia's lips curled back. "*Va-t'-en!*" There was spittle in it. She threatened him with her heavy hoe, then, wheeling, walked out into the potato-field and began, at hazard, to knock out the roots of jimson-weed with its dull blade.

All around Bram's patch the woods made a wall. Heat poured into it as the sun mounted, like fluid into a bowl. Delia's hoe lagged. Swiftly the illusion of well-being was dissipated. The flame of the sun, added to the flame of the fever, burned her. The field and the green wall around it swam with the swimming of her eyes. Her knees bent double and let her down on the earth between the potato-rows.

This was the end, she thought. But now she considered it without terror, only dully. Bram was nowhere about. He had gone back toward the "yard," for a drink of liquor perhaps. But it would not have mattered one way or the other; Delia had forgotten about Bram.

She lay on an elbow in the furrow, her head hanging, her eyes blank on the earth. In her fingers alone was there activity. They crept in, wriggled, dug in under the powdery crust, blind as worms or as roots, nosing down through the dead part to where the earth was damp and alive, to try to get a grip of it.

Soil and sun and a low veil of leaves.

A potato-leaf, cut by some gnawer, fell down to the dust before Delia's eyes. It lay there green on white. Fever played with it, and of a sudden it was white on green, white of news print on the green of a table in a restaurant in the Bois de Vincennes.

A clipping from a paper. *Le Matin.* Jacques Monck's column. Jacques Monck's words:

> . . . Straus, Stravinsky, Honegger, yea, giants, molding and naming for yourselves a musical age. Agreed. One stands before you with bowed head. I mean it, reverently.
>
> But what of you others, concerning whom there is no question of reverence, but only of laughter, pulse, *diablerie?* A new beating of old drums in the antique dark. What of you, Johnnie Bell, with your jungle-remembering banjo: what of you two, Blaise Watterson of Harlem, Honeyboy Zipp in London, with your witch-doctor batons and your evolving "blues"; what of you, Delia Manigault, who, nightly, on the stage of Paris, with the infinitely subtle *gaucherie* of your dark limbs and the intricate and simple incitement of your jeweled, whispering feet, create and continually recreate the measure of the morrow's dancing of a hundred million feet?
>
> What of you others, I say? Would it not be a thing of irony, then, if looking back one day upon this minute double decade, the historians, not alone of music, but of letters, of sociology, of politics and religion, should find the names of you others, you children of the jungle, of the slave-market?

Soil and sun and a low veil of leaves. And a Gullah girl, come out from the cabin in the "nigger-house yard" to till the earth in her generation, lying there, hoe lost, tilling it with nothing but her fingers now.

A shadow, come and gone. Was that Bram? No, it was more fearful than the shadow of Bram; it was like the shadow

of the wing of the angel of a dark, remonstrant God.

"Impious nigger-girl! Presumptuous, temerarious, fantastical! Rub your forehead in the master dust there; cast out the maggots of dreaming from your brain, and repent!"

That shadow again, and another with it. Now there were two buzzards, circling.

When Delia knew that, she scrambled up somehow and ran along the furrow toward the human being, Bram. Bram had had his drink. Corn liquor does things that not even prayer can do. Bram had to laugh aloud with the power of his exultant wonder at sight of this lissom "yalluh woman," but a half-hour ago so "no-mannersable," flying to him with wild hands out. He had to laugh at her weight, at her cry: "O, fuh Jedus, tek cyare uh me!"

Delia felt herself being carried, and that was enough; she neither knew nor cared that it was toward the farther woods. She knew nothing of it when Bram, sensing a change in the heft of his burden, stopped to study it, swore, scowled, vacillated, shivered a little, muttered: "What I duh do, mek-so de woman gwine dead?" and, turning back on his tracks, started in haste for the "yard."

Through the heat of noon and through the long afternoon Delia lay on her mother's bed in the cabin and knew nothing of it, nothing when she twisted, nothing when she coughed. The sun declined. Men and women and children came back from the fields. The banked fires were awakened with slivers of fat lightwood, and the smell of bacon and corn-hominy was blown about with the smoke. Once again the shadows of the cabins in file set out across the mile-wide marsh in their losing race with dusk, the destroyer. Once again old Bloom sat on her door-sill and watched them, rocking to the measure of her mournful song.

> . . . An' I look on de mountain, an' de mountain so high;
> Lawd, I gots to climb dat mountain high . . .

Fatalist, that the child who had been given back to her bosom yesterday should to-day be lying there in chance of being snatched away again, was all of a piece with the "lonesome road" which one is born but to follow, whistling, laughing, pranking as gaily as one can. There was no use in running about, wringing hands, pestering fate. How ill Delia was she

had no way of knowing: either she would grow better or she would grow worse; Bloom had done all she could, for now.

After dark it would be another matter; there was perhaps another thing she could do. But she was a good member of the "'Vangelical Baptiss'" at the Three Crossroads, and it was hardly dusk yet, the tips of the shadows still left to reach for the distant sand. So there was nothing to do but sit and wait, rock and croon.

All I wanta know, am my sin' fohgibbun;
All I wanta know, am my soul set free? . . .

Now the shadows were gone. Gradually for a few minutes, then swiftly, the black coast night made. Supper was out of the way in all the cabins, but it was Saturday, and no work to-morrow, so no one was going to bed. Shades passed up the "street," some with monosyllabic queries thrown to the old woman swaying on the sill. Others kept up a soft pad-pad of soles along the rear way, behind the cabins.

Sukey, the "baby," penned indoors by her mother's bulk, stood on one foot and then on the other; she too wanted to be up there at the top of the yard, where, on the beaten earth under the solitary, sway-limbed live-oak, the premonitory board-thumpings, string-pickings, and can-poundings of the dance were already beginning to be heard.

Sensing the child's restiveness, Bloom turned on her with a guarded vehemence.

"No-suh, you can't duh gwine out dis ebenin'. You stay here; tek cyare yuh sistuh." Bloom arose, dusting her broad skirts. "Yuh maamy 'e gots a errund. Anybody ask you a answer where yuh maamy am, tell-um I gwine be back-here foh-fibe minute."

Now that it was pitch dark out behind the cabin row and everybody with eyes departed, Bloom could walk boldly on her errand to Gran' Liz's, whose cabin stood inshore a little way, in a palmetto grove. If there was any vacillation it was not in Bloom's feet, but in her mind, nor was the doubt there of the conjur-woman's power to help if she would; it was precisely *whether* she would. A conjur-bag, specific against fevers, is a precious and perishable thing, and Bloom came with empty hands.

As the old woman entered the skirts of the grove the upper

fronds of the trees were reddening with the rays of the fires the dancers had lighted on the marsh bank a hundred yards away, and the clattering throb of the orchestra began to run in the air.

Behind, at the cabin, Sukey hung in the door for a little while, harkening. She hung on the step a little while. Then she too was gone.

Delia could not have said when it was that she began to feel the beat of the music. Its first effect was to translate into a definite dismay all the nameless bodily discomforts of which she had been conscious in her unconsciousness—the heat, the binding of her limbs, and the weight on her heart. Now it was explained in terms of confusion and dismay.

Why had she not been given the call—even the first call? Where was that call-woman? Sneaked out to a *buvette* to steal a glass with her lover, the second electrician? In that case, where were all the others, the dressing-maid, aghast; the stage-manager, apoplectic? Why wasn't back-stage in a tumult, if Manigault had missed her entrance?

For surely she had. Surely it belonged to no act but hers, that rhythm that came jarring, tuneless with distance, repeated and repeated. Appalled, she could see big Sam Pira, his neck craned, his baton agonizing, hoping through another bar and another, and then for yet another time flipping his clarinets and fiddles, his big bull-fiddles and his traps and saxophones, back into the opening.

She could see the waxing consternation of her support, the twenty of them already on-stage and at it, their prancings more and more galvanic with each rebuilding of her entrance, their panicky eyes cornering at the high darkness in the wing where her shadow should long since have come within their sight, snaking along the great moss-hung limb that swayed down, as from a live-oak, across the stage.

Now the thing took on that quality peculiar to nightmare. It was not alone that she was tardy; it was that she was not dressed, not even *un*dressed *to* dress, not even thinking about beginning; half like a cataleptic she lay here on the divan in her dressing-room and did nothing.

She conquered this inaction. She began to tear haphazard at her clothing, plucking it in ribbons; ineptitude still kept

half a grip on her. She couldn't find things. Where was her costume, her circlet of trunks, her few bright rags of crêpe? Where were her jewels, her flashing things? They weren't in the case, and there wasn't any case. They weren't in the lock-drawer, and there wasn't any drawer. Panic added to panic now.

If one who knew the fumbling of her thoughts had been watching Delia's movements in the dark of the cabin, he would have been surprised by their precision, the pulling aside first of the rickety bed, the search on hands and knees, the marking of a board that was loose, its lifting, the quick sweep of an arm beneath it, the sigh of relief, the bag.

Delia had never realized that the runway from her dressing-room to the wings could be so dark, so empty, and so long. Where was everybody? Where, to-night, were all the faces she was used to glimpsing at the turnings of the walls—the black-eyed Arab poet, the little bank clerk, Boracque, with his savage shyness and his flowers, the loafing stage-hands, the worshipful maids? But where now, when it came to that, were the walls themselves? How had wind and stars got into this swollen corridor?

Was it a prank of punishment for her tardiness, one wide conspiracy? Was that why, without warning her, they had shifted all the mechanics of the wings and then cleared out, leaving her to fumble for strange hand-holds, clamber unhelped and unguided up incomprehensible distances, abrading her tender skin on new corners as rough as bark, and catching her hair and rags on unremembered twigs that were like living twigs of a tree?

Victor Jimms and his son Hercules pounded on a plank, their shoulders jerking to the time. Jube Appleton picked on an enormous guitar that had but two strings left. Bram Tollum beat on a drum contrived of a ten-gallon keg, with a cowhide over the end. Three or four boys clapped with the flats of their palms on dried gourds.

Men, women, girls, and boys, all ages, they danced, each one solo, sufficient to himself. To see them, flinging their elbows, cracking the heads back on their necks, knocking their knees together, each seeming to follow nothing but the pattern of his own mercurial impulse—and to hear the perverse and incoherent *mêlée* of their outcries—it would have been

hard to realize that under the surface complexity there lay a simplicity of movement as prescriptive as any prison-step, as formalistic as any ritual, as old as the antique tree that sent its bearded bough down over them to catch the refractions of the bonfires' light; older, even; as old perhaps as the light of bonfires in the night.

Boom—boom—boom . . . "Hi! Crack my foot!"

Boom—boom—boom . . . "Bresséd Jedus! Myam-uh-gunjuh! Lay-down-die!"

When Delia dropped from among the reddened leaves overhead and landed with a pelvic pirouette, light as a feather in a wind-eddy on dust, the dancers shied, yelled, and scattered, some of them never stopping in flight till they had reached the protecting lee of the first of the cabins. The lads in the orchestra dropped their gourds and retreated somersaulting into the wild-oat cover on the marsh bank behind them.

This woman, this strange "chillun" of Aunty Bloom's, come but yesterday out of nowhere, she must have died after all, as folks had said she would. "Sick-to-dead," she couldn't have been flying around in that tree-top while no one knew it: "done-dead," she might. Of all the music-makers, Bram was the only one to hold his ground. Eyes swollen, mouth wide, legs gathered for jumping, after the first startled hiatus he let his cudgel fall on the cowhide and got hold of the running beat again.

Now how he did beat! He beat with a violence compounded of terror and fascination.

"Mek-so de woman *done*-dead, mek-so 'e *am* a sperrit, I don' cyare! Lawd, *my* Lawd Gawd!" *Boom—boom—boom—boom* . . .

Half seen, half veiled in the streaming chiffons her garments were, uncomprehended jewels weaving living fires around her —in his dreams Bram had never dreamed of flesh of woman like this.

"Mek-so 'e a hag-woman, I don' cyare!" *Boom.* "Debbil gwine graff me; let-um!"

A flame of hysterical passion burned him.

"What a woman fuh lubb! *What a woman fuh dance!*"

Now it was no longer Bram that beat the drum. Cudgel, arm, body, and mind, now they were all one instrument, pounding willy-nilly. Now it was Delia that beat the drum.

At first Delia danced simply because it was the hour to dance. Here was the stage, the music, the support, all the familiar preparation. The whirlwind vanishing of her chorus and the stoppage of the orchestra shook her, leaving her for a moment "all in the air." But she was trained in a hard tradition. With the re-emergence of the dance-beat, insecure at first but growing in power, she could throw off the panic that had so nearly laid hold of her, and dance, and wonder.

Near-memories ran in with her puzzlement and her deepening suspicion. The want of a call, the deserted corridors, the sly tamperings with the mechanics of her entrance, every familiar move of hers made unfamiliar and difficult. Why? Had she been right; was there premeditation in it? Malice? Now this emptying of the stage by tacit treachery, leaving her to carry on, impossibly, alone. This stripping of the music. This conspiracy of silence out there in the enormous house——

And now—*what* an enormous house! Nightmare must be playing tricks again. Almost as enormous, it seemed to be growing, as the whole of outdoors, the whole black bowl of the towering night, myriad-packed, shadows ringed above shadows till their cigarets and lighting matches became as high and tiny and many as the stars. All watching concentrically. All waiting unmoved. As dumb as the dead.

Here was something Delia Manigault had never had to know before; it came out of that house against her, as speaking as a wind one can neither see nor hear:

"Well, nigger-girl?"

To her bewilderment was added the beginning of dismay. She cried, panting, while she continued to fling her body, pivot, and bend her limbs: "What do you want, you-all? You know me; you know what I can do. Why all this? How do you get this way?"

"Well, nigger-girl?"

She cried in fury: "What do you think? This is no try-out!" But then, touched by the misgiving that lies forever in the favorite's heart, she wondered if it was. That *second* try-out, the irrevocable and pitiless one— If it was, it was monstrous for them to have asked it so, without warning, without prop or help, against their silence.

"Well, nigger-girl?" She seemed to hear a fleering, "Is that your stuff?"

"How can you expect anybody to do her best stuff like this?" She turned coward, the supplicant. "Yes! Wait! Watch me now. Now I'm going good. I'm going better now."

But she wasn't going better; she was going worse. She punished herself, but it was of no use; a heaviness began to envelop her limbs. In despair she flung into another figure, more sophisticated and more intricate. This was what they wanted; the other was too naïve and looked too easy. Calling on all her store of virtuosity, she added complication to complication.

Now they would *have* to leap up, acclaim, applaud. The heat around her head would burst it. The drum-beat was getting ahead of her; she had to whip her failing muscles with her tiring nerves to keep up. The thin, hot sweat that ran down into her eyes would blind them, unless she could "get the house," and do it very, very soon.

Now it seemed as though there must be a spotlight searching at random over the tiers of that black immensity out front. Here it hovered, bringing alive for an instant a remembered face; there it ran and stopped again. Petey Pilcher, the almost-white boy, fiddler, St. Louis. How many years was it since he had killed his career so that Delia Manigo's might live? And now there; only shoulders and the top of a head, the face hidden in the hands; that was Monck of *Le Matin*. Disappointed? Fed up? Or asleep?

So they came, so they went, faces, faces, faces. All of the same size, distinct but distant, so many masks, emotionless. Now there were three together, three in a box, black coats, braided, and ribbons across their breasts. And Delia remembered the three, the messengers of a king.

Greed and fright and bitterness. Had they come back to take it away from her, their "decoration"? With one hand she pawed among the streaming rags at her bosom for the touch of the great six-pointed star, then more wildly still, with both hands. But already the light had passed and the three were gone and no star could she find; all that her fingers had caught was a necklace, a tiny thread of pearls. At that a cry went out of her mouth, "*Édouard!*"

The roving nimbus of the spotlight was arrested, as if an unseen manipulator had heard. There was Édouard Lebrun, as if incalculably far off, but large and vivid, watching her as a

stranger might, his face quite immobile, his eyes as dead as glass.

That dance was done. For an instant Delia stood, keeping her balance on her wabbly legs. Holding the necklace high away from her throat, aglimmer in the red light for the glazed eyes to see, she cried with all her might and all her fright:

"*Souviens-toi!*"

It went only a little way and fell: it couldn't cross that distance. "*Remember!*" It couldn't touch Édouard Lebrun. In the widening nimbus he turned to the girl beside him, the white-and-golden Norse girl who sang at the Folies, Olga Pedesen. He smiled, and she smiled in answer. And under the thrust of Delia's hooked thumb the necklace parted. Where it went then she did not know; she had a vivid illusion of baubles turned bubbles and bubbles broken in the air.

She commenced to fall. But a sob caught her and lifted her straight up again.

"*Boom!*" A simple drum-note. "*Boom!*" Imperious, powerful.

"Nigguh-gall, you all t'rough? Cyan't you dance no mo'?"

"Can't I dance no more?"

Another sob took Delia's body and twisted it, flinging the pelvis one way, the shoulders the other. But her feet were tied to the ground.

"*Boom! Boom! Boom!*"

The measure of the beat increased, and with it the measure of the sobs that flung her. But now, what difference, what did she care? She gave them rein. The moment she had done that a queer thing happened. There were no longer sobs, but laughter, Gullah laughter.

"*Cyan't* I dance! Lookuh de nigguh-gal. Dance? Yi—yi—yi—yi—yi—yi!"

"Gibb-um debbil! T'row yoh elbow! Crack yoh knee'!"

"I bigg-um debbil! I shake-um down!"

The beginning of marvels. Amazement. Exultation. Why had she ever forgotten the power that was in her when she no longer worried or cared or thought of herself as an artist or of dancing as dancing—when, very simply, getting hold of the brown earth with her two brown feet, she could give herself up body and soul to the hollering drum?

"Nigguh-gal," she fleered and gloried, "'e duh shake de Bukra out uh hebben!"

True it was, she was shaking and shivering them, the tiers of that enormous "house" against the sky. Her laughter rang higher and higher, flouting and fleering. "Nigguh-gal, 'e crack 'e back-bone, t'row 'e shoulduh, shake de Gawd-a-mighty white folks down!"

Wizening shadows, like rags of wind-struck cloud she saw them tumbling. The loopings and bendings of her flesh had got beyond her now; she had no feeling of them. Faster, faster, wilder, wilder. And of a sudden they reached the fulness of simplicity, and stopped.

That was done. The floor of the old marsh she saw empty, wound by the channels of the tide; the bowl of the sky she saw hollow, wiped clean of all but the glitter of the Sea Island stars. Her pæan was hardly louder than the rustling of the wind: "Done shake-um down!"

The fires were going to embers and their light warmed the earth. Delia was down on her buckled knees on the earth, and she had hold of it with her hands. To have safe hold of the earth is to be part of it, and to be part of the earth is to be imperishable.

Now everything around Delia was part of it. The little cabins, they were not like things built. The slowly tossing wild oats, the trees, the ember-lit watchers ringed in distance, and Bram, nearer, broad-bottomed on the beaten ground, his great spent wrists hanging over the head of his cowhide tom-tom and the sweat of heaven trickling down them as red as blood—they were all, parcel with Delia Manigo, but the earth where it moved and breathed and desired. And so was maamy now, of a sudden, between her two big soft wings of shadows.

"What you duh do dey, Chile? Whuf-foh you duh lay 'pon-top de groun'?"

Delia was so heavy-close to the ground now that she heard a breathing. That was the ocean on the barrier beaches miles away. But she thought it was the beginning of the beating of another drum. Boom—boom—boom! The oldest drum of all. And Delia thought she was dancing to it. She thought she was a child on the marsh bank in the cool of "dayclean," with the smoke of breakfast fires blowing down around her seaward,

and the stamp and clank of hitching mules and the chitter of rushing birds brittle in the air. Dancing, vagrant as a feather.

Somebody was speaking far off, as far off as the other end of Edisto.

"Look up yoh maamy, Delia. I gots a conjuh from de conjuh-woman. Now you gwine be all-well."

Dancing, lighter, lighter, lighter than any feather, laughing, caroling.

"Conjuh, Maamy? Whuffoh conjuh? I *gots* a conjuh. I *yiz* all-well."

A MATTER OF STANDARDS

BY JULIAN STREET

FROM *Scribner's*

JULIAN STREET

is a winner of a former O. Henry Memorial Award. His books include "Tides" and other novels, as well as two popular travelers' guide-books, "Paris à la carte" and "Where Paris Dines." He is also celebrated as the inspiration of two famous French dishes: Canard Julian Street at Lapre, and Poire Julian Street at Auberge Jean.

RECLINING on a couch in his hotel bedroom, its French windows open to the rumble of traffic in the Rue de Rivoli, J. Clyde Dillman gazed at a steel engraving of Napoleon, above the marble mantelpiece, and wondered how much trouble he was going to have with Mr. Starbuck.

A curious coincidence, his finding this portrait in his room. His wife had always said he looked like Napoleon, and he himself was not insensible to the resemblance, perceiving, in addition to the physical likeness, a parallel between Napoleon's swift rise to imperial rank and his own swift rise to the rank of Vice-President and Sales Director of the Eureka Safety Razor Company.

His thoughts were half with himself, half with the Emperor, when the telephone rang and the concierge announced that Mr. Starbuck was waiting in the lounge. Dillman rose, slipped into his coat, adjusted his soft gray hat to a jaunty angle, took up a pair of lemon-yellow gloves, and started downstairs.

Mr. Starbuck beamed through his glasses when Dillman told him how well he was looking. People getting on toward seventy didn't mind hearing such things, and in this case it happened to be true. Instead of sticking to active business and waiting for his arteries to harden, the Old Man had begun, at sixty, to take long vacations, testing the younger men of the company with increased responsibility and finally selecting Dillman to run the business in his absence. Of late years his confidence in Dillman had grown to such a point that he and Mrs. Starbuck had settled abroad, spending placid summers on the golf links at Le Touquet, winters at Cannes or in Egypt, and the intermediate seasons in a spacious apartment in Paris, where once or twice a year Dillman reported to him.

Always, when Dillman came to Paris, Mr. Starbuck celebrated the event at one of his favorite restaurants, and today's welcoming feast, at Larue's, was designed to harmonize

with a Château Margaux of '93, Dillman's birth year, which, characteristically, the Old Man had remembered.

"Well, Clyde," he said, when, luncheon over, their cigars were lighted, "is there anything special on your mind this trip?"

"Yes, Chief, there is. The women's trade."

"Oh, I wouldn't worry about that," said Mr. Starbuck, who had never been enthusiastic about this growing branch of the business. "We're making the Eureka Bijou for them, and they're buying it, so what more do we want?"

"A lot more," Dillman answered. "We haven't even scratched the woman's market. I've had our people carrying questionnaires around and we've made up some significant statistics. For example, the average woman under forty uses a safety razor once or twice a week, yet only thirty-eight per cent have razors of their own. The big majority of women borrow razors from their men-folks, and don't even dry the blade afterward, let alone change it. And twenty-one per cent leave the razor all caked up. I don't care how mean a man is with money, he'll be glad to see us sell a Eureka Bijou to his wife, daughter, sister, or sweetheart, because it's to——"

"Sweetheart?" broke in Mr. Starbuck. "What's his sweetheart got to do with it?"

"Oh," said Dillman blandly, "we ran across cases of that kind too—you'd be surprised. And there's another important angle to it. Statistics show that ninety-one per cent of our blade kicks come from married men. You see what that means? The woman sneaks a dry shave with her husband's Eureka, cleans it and puts it back; next morning he gets a rotten shave, and pretty soon we lose a customer."

Mr. Starbuck looked thoughtful, and Dillman, watching him, admired, as he often had before, the formidable bony structure of the Old Man's forehead, nose and jaw.

"What do you propose?"

"I want to run a special advertising campaign directed exclusively to women. Mostly educational. Our statistics show that fifty-four per cent of them shave dry and use no lotions afterward. And get this, Chief—not one in a hundred owns a shaving brush."

"How much is it going to cost?"

"A hundred thousand dollars."

"That's a lot of money."

"Yes," said Dillman resolutely, "and I want to spend fifty thousand of it the first three months." From an inside pocket he drew a sheet of foolscap. "Here's the schedule."

Mr. Starbuck examined the paper. "It's a good list," he said, "but I don't understand your totals. You said fifty thousand dollars in the first three months, and this says thirty-five."

"The thirty-five thousand is for space," Dillman explained, "and the balance is for copy."

The Old Man lowered his head and stared over the tops of his glasses.

"Copy?" he repeated. "Who's going to write this fifteen-thousand-dollar copy—Shakespeare?"

Dillman had expected this and, Napoleonlike, was prepared to stand his ground.

"I don't blame you for being surprised," he said. "Nobody knew the advertising game any better than you used to when you were building up the business. But we're still following the policy of conservatism and understatement you adopted more than thirty years ago, and the fact is, Mr. Starbuck, that sort of stuff's entirely out of date. In advertising, and in everything else, moderation is passé. You can't attract attention by whispering at a prizefight, and you can't attract attention by understatement in an ad when every other advertiser is yelling. Our advertising has got to be pepped up. And there's just one way to do it. Indorsements."

"From satisfied customers?"

"Yes, but——"

"So that's your new idea, is it?" Mr. Starbuck chuckled. "Why, Clyde, I printed indorsements—testimonials we used to call them—away back in the days when our only competitor was the old-fashioned straight razor. It's a good enough way to advertise, and I have no objections. But before going on with that, let's finish up with this scheme of yours for advertising to the women. You haven't told me yet how you expect to spend that fifteen thousand for copy."

"That's just what I'm talking about. Indorsements."

Again the Old Man lowered his head and looked over his glasses.

"From *women?*"

"Certainly."

"You mean to tell me you're planning to ask women to—to say they use a razor?"

"That's it."

"And you're going to *pay* them for it?"

"Why, of course."

"Well," Mr. Starbuck broke in, "if you think we want to advertise the Eureka Bijou with testimonials from a lot of Haymarket girls, you've got the wrong——"

"Hold on, Chief." Dillman raised a hand in protest. "I don't mean that kind at all. For fifteen thousand I can get six of the best-known ladies in the country."

"Ladies?"

"Yes, I'm planning to lead off with a princess. Then maybe a countess. Then an American society woman—New York and Newport stuff—the best I can find. That makes three expensive ones to give us prestige at the start, so I'll taper off with a Senator's daughter and a couple of important débutantes. The regular rate for débutantes runs from two-fifty to five hundred."

"Very interesting. What are princesses bringing?"

"As high as six or eight thousand, if they photograph well."

"Oh," said Mr. Starbuck, "you plan to use their pictures too?"

"That's one of the main features," answered Dillman. "They like the publicity, and they like to get the money for their pet charities."

"I see. And you think other women will buy our razor because some society woman uses it?"

"It's been proven over and over again. What put Suntex Fabrics on the map? Indorsements. What made Plantation Cigarettes? Indorsements. What's putting over the big brands of stockings, cosmetics and bathroom fixtures? Indorsements!"

"These ladies indorse bathroom fixtures, too?"

"Sure."

"With photographs?"

"Why, Chief"—Dillman leaned forward and lowered his voice—"I happen to know that the Santura Company is about to launch an indorsement campaign to popularize their new——"

"Your cigar's gone out," broke in Mr. Starbuck loudly.

"—to popularize——"

"I'll get you a fresh one," the Old Man persisted. "And I declare, Clyde! Just because I don't drink liqueurs, I forgot to order one for you. Here, garçon!"

Had anything further been required to raise Dillman's spirits, it was the *Fine* of 1865 which Mr. Starbuck ordered. Soft, mellow and rich, it warmed him through, filling him with a golden optimism. The Old Man had taken things better than he had dared expect. If a person would listen to you with an open mind and judge your proposition fairly, that was all you had a right to ask. The rest was up to you.

Mr. Starbuck had been gazing down the room; now he looked back at Dillman.

"It won't do, Clyde," he said slowly. "From a purely merchandising standpoint your plan is probably all right, but there are other points to be considered. You tell me that moderation in advertising is passé. That may be so. But what about dignity and self-respect? Are they passé, too? Vulgarity is vulgarity, Clyde, no matter who indulges in it. This scheme of buying testimonials is false and cheap, and you'll never convince me that women who go in for it aren't false and cheap. I don't want to be identified with that sort of people."

"But I tell you you're wrong!" cried Dillman. "The most prominent women in the country give paid indorsements." He rattled off half-a-dozen well-known names. "You can't say such women as those aren't ladies!"

"It seems to me they've proved they aren't."

"Well, if names like those don't satisfy you, tell me one that does." Dillman spoke defiantly. "If they aren't ladies, who *is* a lady?"

To his surprise, the Old Man answered promptly.

"That woman over there."

Dillman's gaze followed Mr. Starbuck's to a table down the room, at which sat a deep-bosomed woman in cornflower blue.

"Somebody you know?"

"No," said Mr. Starbuck, "but I always feel as if I knew her. She was Virginia Cotesworth. I used to see her when she was a little thing driving around town in her pony phaëton

with her mother. That was in Deephaven, before we built our plant there. After she grew up she used to come back to the old Cotesworth place once in a while, but by that time the family was living mostly in New York. She married a grandson of old Cortlandt Peale, and the wedding made a——"

"Oh," exclaimed Dillman, "Mrs. Geoffrey Peale? I've seen their yacht at Martha's Vineyard. Yes, the Geoffrey Peales are very prominent. I don't believe she's ever indorsed anything, though. At least if she has I've never seen it."

"No," said Mr. Starbuck, "the Cotesworths aren't that kind of stock. They've always had standards. When anybody speaks of a 'lady' or a 'gentleman' I always think of that family.

"I remember when Mrs. Peale's great-aunt, Miss Elspeth Cotesworth, married an English nobleman, and a reporter smuggled himself into the church and wrote about the wedding. That was in the late 'sixties, before the newspapers had society columns, and it was considered common for a woman to have her name in the paper for any reason whatsoever. Well, when old Governor Cotesworth, the bride's father, saw the write-up, he went down and gave the editor a caning. That's how much the Cotesworths thought of social publicity."

"We're not living in the 'sixties now," said Dillman. "Ideas have changed since then, and so have people."

"Some people, maybe."

"Well, a lot of Mrs. Peale's friends give indorsements," Dillman argued, "and in my judgment it's perfectly possible she might be willing to herself. I'd like to get her—just to convince you. It wouldn't hurt to try, anyhow."

An expression of displeasure came into Mr. Starbuck's eyes.

"Let's drop the subject, Clyde," he said. "A lady simply doesn't do that sort of thing."

II

Before evening Dillman had found out at what hotel Mrs. Geoffrey Peale was staying, but when he called it was only to

be told that she was not at home. She was sailing next day on the *Gigantic*, he learned, and when, twenty-four hours later, that stately liner steamed away from Cherbourg, J. Clyde Dillman was among her passengers.

"Sorry, sir," said the chief steward, taking the five-hundred-franc note, "but I've had special instructions to place Mrs. Geoffrey Peale and her secretary at a small table by themselves."

The deck steward, however, was open to persuasion, and next morning Dillman found his deck-chair beside the chairs assigned to Mrs. Peale.

His vigil was not rewarded until noon, when there appeared a blond young woman with eyeglasses and an efficient manner, with whom, through artifices having to do with books and steamer rugs, he presently got into conversation. Her name was Miss Bates, and she was, as he had supposed, Mrs. Peale's secretary. Mrs. Peale herself did not appear that day, but Dillman put in his time with Miss Bates to good advantage, telling her of his business and of his advertising plans. Miss Bates, he found, was quite a clever girl; she agreed that indorsements from women of social importance would sell Eureka Bijous by the thousands, and his appreciation of her so increased that before saying good night he went to his cabin and returned with two Eureka Bijou Specials—dainty gold-plated razors in compact gold-plated boxes—and pressed them into her hand.

"One for you," he said gently, gazing into her eyeglasses, "and the other—I thought maybe you'd like to give it to Mrs. Peale."

Reviewing the day as he prepared for bed, Dillman felt satisfied with his progress. He had made a friend of Miss Bates, but would she, as a mere secretary, feel free to introduce him to Mrs. Peale?

This question was uppermost in his mind, next morning, when he met them briskly walking the sunlit deck. He had decided to take his cue from Miss Bates and when she gave him a bright nod in passing, he observed with satisfaction that Mrs. Peale glanced at him, too. Evidently Miss Bates had already spoken to her about him. He went to his seat and watched them as they passed on successive circuits until, al-

most an hour later, they came toward their deck-chairs, whereupon he rose.

Dillman had heard somewhere that no one was so democratic as the genuine aristocrat, and a few minutes' conversation with Mrs. Peale showed him that she was not only democratic, but unaffected and magnetic. No wonder the common run of women followed the lead of such ladies as Mrs. Geoffrey Peale!

Their conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a middle-aged and very British gentleman, his face mapped with purple veins, who shouted at Mrs. Peale across the intervening row of steamer-chairs, addressing her as Zinnie and complaining that she had kept him and Tina and Reggie waiting an hour for their game.

"Sorry, Spuds," she answered placidly, "but I've found such an interesting man."

"Well, you come along and play contract," ordered Spuds severely, whereupon Mrs. Peale rose, saying to Dillman:

"I haven't thanked you, have I, for your gift? It was so nice of you. We must have another talk. Miss Bates will tell you how I adore the young American business man—the Man who Does Things." And with a radiant smile she was gone.

"Who's that man?" he asked Miss Bates.

"The Duke of Pentwater. He and the Duchess are to visit Mrs. Peale at Newport. They're poor, and they're hoping to pick up an American fortune for their son—a beautiful boy but practically an idiot."

Dillman had intended to wait a little longer before definitely broaching the subject of indorsements, but this opening was too good to be overlooked.

"If the Duchess wants to pick up a little money," he began, "I might be able to get her in on our new advertising campaign. How is she on looks?"

"She isn't young," said Miss Bates.

"The photographers can fix that. Put her in a big dark hat with lots of shadows and she'll turn out all right. The one I really want, though, is Mrs. Peale."

Anxiously he waited, watching Miss Bates's face.

"They're always trying to get Mrs. Peale," she answered.

"Has she ever indorsed anything?"

"No."

"I realize," said Dillman, "that money doesn't mean much to Mrs. Peale, but——"

"Oh, doesn't it, though!" broke in Miss Bates, with a disconcerting little laugh.

"But," pursued Dillman, "all these ladies have their pet charities. It's a great way to raise money for charity, and of course a woman who does it gets a lot of publicity for herself, too."

"You'd hardly say that Mrs. Peale needs publicity, would you?"

"Perhaps not in the East," Dillman answered, "but you'd be surprised at the ignorance of the West. None of the big Eastern social leaders had national reputations until these indorsement campaigns came along."

"How much were you planning to pay?"

"I was thinking of five thousand dollars."

"You'll certainly never get her for that."

"With a lady like Mrs. Peale I guess we won't have any friction over money."

"That remains to be seen," replied Miss Bates. Her tone was unmistakably cynical. Nevertheless, before the gay notes of the luncheon bugle echoed down the deck, it was agreed that she would sound out Mrs. Peale upon the subject.

Dillman spent the early part of the afternoon in going over the plans for his campaign. Mr. Starbuck had not, in so many words, approved the purchase of indorsements, so everything depended on landing Mrs. Peale. He must land her—even if he had to go as high as ten thousand dollars and skimp the other indorsers accordingly. He must! More strongly than ever, the Napoleonic spirit dominated him when he left his cabin and set out to find Miss Bates.

Failing to discover her on the promenade, he stood for a time at the forward angle of the deck and watched the slow lift and fall of the massive bow. The wind had risen, there were white caps now and the sky ahead was black. Rough weather coming—yet the ship plunged, indomitably forward.

Far, far ahead, beyond that dark horizon, lay the vast reaches of a continent. His country! America—with her mountains, valleys, plains, her teeming towns and cities, her millions of women waiting to be made Eureka-conscious.

III

"No, Mr. Dillman," said Mrs. Peale amiably, when their conference in her salon on A Deck had proceeded for a time, "I've had countless opportunities to go into this sort of thing and I don't propose to hold any bargain sales."

"But five thousand dollars——"

"Five thousand doesn't interest me in the least."

"Why, Mrs. Peale," he protested, "for that figure I can get a princess."

She smiled sweetly. "I don't doubt it. You ought to be able to get half-a-dozen for that. God knows there are enough of them floating around."

"Well, for that matter," he said, a trifle nettled, "there are plenty of society women, too. In fact our advertising agents tell me that indorsement prices are due for a big drop. The field's getting over-crowded."

"Not at the top, Mr. Dillman, not at the top."

"Let's be perfectly candid about——"

"Exactly," she broke in. "Let's be candid. I happen to know what my friends have been getting, and for a name such as mine five thousand dollars is simply nothing at all."

"Mrs. Peale," he urged in a confidential tone, "I'll put all my cards on the table. Our appropriation for six indorsements is just fifteen thousand dollars, and I'm prepared to pay half the entire amount for yours alone."

"But my dear Mr. Dillman"—she made a pretty gesture with her slim, patrician hands—"it isn't a question of what proportion of your total I take. It's a question of the value of my name. Some names you can get for very little; others will cost more. Mine happens to be one of the latter class. Don't you see it all depends on what class of name you want—on what your standards are? The whole affair is one of standards."

"Seventy-five hundred doesn't interest you, either?"

"Certainly not. I know a perfectly impossible woman—a climbing nonentity who married a big name—and her regular rate is fifteen thousand. If I were to accept what she does I'd feel that I was definitely cheapening myself."

Dillman could not deny the force of her argument. Social position in America, he knew, was no longer determined by

publicity alone, but was coming to be gauged by the amount a woman could command for her indorsement. Nevertheless, even for Mrs. Peale's indorsement, fifteen thousand dollars seemed exorbitant. Mr. Starbuck's attitude, however, had to be considered. His approval of the campaign was essential, and the only way to get it was to get Mrs. Peale.

"All right, then," he conceded. "Fifteen thousand."

"No," she said, smiling. "Twenty."

"My God," he gasped, "I can't go that high! Nobody ever got that much. Come on, Mrs. Peale—be a sport and split the difference! Call it seventeen thousand five hundred, won't you? Even at that I'll have to wireless our president. An extra twenty-five hundred is bad enough, but if I have to ask him for five thousand more the whole campaign may fall through."

Mrs. Peale's gaze rested thoughtfully upon the window, beyond which gray seas, piling high, seemed to keep pace with the lurching ship.

"All right," she said. "Seventeen thousand five hundred."

"Thanks," said Dillman flaccidly. "As soon as everything's settled, we'll send a check for that amount to whatever charity you name."

"No, just send it to me."

"Very good," he agreed. "Now about the photograph: You ought to be posed in a kimono in a nice tiled bathroom, holding a Eureka Bijou in your hand."

"Oh, no. Not with the razor—and not in a bathroom."

"I don't mean the whole bathroom," he said hastily. "Just a suggestion of tiles and a mirror."

Firmly she shook her head. "Nothing of the kind was mentioned. I'll be photographed in the drawing room of my New York house. It's a handsome panelled room copied from the old Gothic chapel at St. Albans."

"But, Mrs. Peale——"

"If you want me in the bathroom," announced the lady. "you'll have to pay the full twenty thousand."

"All right, then," he said mournfully, as he rose. "In the drawing room."

As he hurried down the creaking corridor outside, he found it difficult to keep his footing.

"I never knew a big liner could roll like this," he remarked to the lift attendant.

"Nor I, sir," replied the cheerful cockney. "It's an 'owling 'urricane, sir, and she's chynged 'er course."

"What for?"

"That I couldn't syy, sir."

But when Dillman tried to send his despatch to Mr. Starbuck he learned why the *Gigantic's* course had been changed.

"Sorry, sir," said the clerk, "but we can't accept messages at present. There's a ship in distress."

"This message is extremely important," announced Dillman, frowning.

"Sorry, sir," the clerk repeated, "but it's orders."

IV

Under a gray, reeling dawn, through drifting fog and gusts of rain, the *Gigantic* slowly circled an area of troubled water which, though indistinguishable from the surrounding sea, was to the navigators of the ship a spot as definitely located as if it had been marked by a vast tombstone.

Before full daylight a lifeboat from the sunken ship was sighted, lifting and falling on the long swells, aftermath of the hurricane, and its dazed occupants were with difficulty brought safely to the liner's deck. By nightfall five more lifeboats had been rescued, and the *Gigantic*, after crackling conversations with other vessels now gathered on the scene, left them to continue the search and pointed her swift prow once more in the direction of New York.

Quickly the tale of the disaster ran through the *Gigantic*, quickly her wireless spread the news throughout the world, and the clothes of the survivors were still damp with seawater when the newspapers of five continents started beating out the story.

The first meagre bulletins, telling only of the heavy loss of life, sent a wave of horror sweeping across the world; then, as details became known, horror was followed by rage, for it developed that greedy owners had sent the vessel forth unseaworthy, and that the crew had rowed away while passengers were drowning.

Out of this dark and shameful welter emerged a solitary hero.

Thomas Bush, wireless operator, had stayed at his post and

gone down with the ship. Gaining the surface, he swam to a lifeboat manned by several members of the crew who were rowing away. After clubbing down a defiant stoker Bush turned the boat back and dived time and again into dangerous seas to rescue drowning men and women. And now, safe aboard the *Gigantic*, these rescued men and women told and retold the story of his heroism.

Like all his fellow passengers, Dillman thrilled to the tale of Bush's deeds, and yet he did not appreciate Bush fully until news began to come by wireless from New York. The hero would be met by a committee at Quarantine and whisked away to the Battery. Mounted police would escort him up Broadway. The Mayor would bestow upon him the Freedom of the City, and from Washington came rumors of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

To Dillman, the hero was now more than a hero. The omnipotent hand of publicity, reaching out across unmeasured leagues of sea, had plucked him from obscurity and raised him aloft to dangle gloriously before the eyes of an ecstatic universe. Bush was at the moment the most talked-of man in the world.

It was his position in the public eye, rather than his heroism, that caused Dillman to pay him a visit. Mrs. Peale knew of the visit in advance and to her, immediately afterward, Dillman carried his grievance.

"I don't know whether the fellow is hopelessly stupid," he said, "or whether he's dazed by what he's just been through. Anyhow, he claims he isn't interested in the idea—won't even talk about it."

"How much did you offer him?"

"I expected he'd want to trade with me, so I started at a thousand. And that was as far as I could get because the fool wouldn't talk."

"Probably he doesn't want to commit himself," suggested Mrs. Peale, "until he reaches New York and sees what other offers he can get."

"That may be it," said Dillman, frowning, "but somehow I don't think so."

"What's the most you'd be willing to pay him?"

"His indorsement would be a grand thing to lead off our new campaign for men. At a pinch I'd give him five thousand."

"Do you want me to get him for you?"

Dillman stared at her.

"Yes, I mean it," she said. "I'll get him for you at five thousand or less, on the understanding that whatever I can save belongs to me." And as he hesitated she went on: "If it's going to be done at all it must be done at once."

"What makes you think you can do it?" he asked with grudging admiration.

"Because I'm a woman." Gaily she rose from her deck-chair. "You just take me down there," she said, laying her lovely hand on Dillman's arm, "and I'll attend to the rest."

V

Thomas Bush, lying on a sofa in a borrowed bathrobe, glanced toward the door with tired eyes as they entered.

"Oh, don't get up!" protested the lady as he started to rise. "I'm Mrs. Geoffrey Peale, and I couldn't let the voyage end without coming to shake the young hero's hand. We are all proud beyond words, Mr. Bush, to be on the same ship with you."

Bush was plainly embarrassed. "Excuse my looks," he said, feeling the tawny stubble on his lean, strong chin, "but the doctor said for us to take it easy, and we weren't expecting callers." As he said "we," he indicated a curtained bunk across the room.

"Oh—are we disturbing someone?"

"Nothing disturbs a sailor when he's asleep." Bush smiled faintly, and Mrs. Peale, returning the smile, continued in an ingratiating voice:

"Mr. Bush, you are going to receive many honors, but we all feel that there should be a material reward as well. Mr. Dillman tells me he mentioned something of the sort to you, but he felt that perhaps you didn't quite understand. So I thought I'd better come to see you about it."

Bush looked at Dillman, then at her, but made no reply.

"We've been talking it over," she went on, "and we've decided to make it two thousand dollars instead of one. Think of it, Mr. Bush!" Her patrician hands fluttered in an impressive gesture. "Two thousand dollars for just signing your name to a little testimonial."

"Yes," said Dillman, "all I want is for you to sign a statement something like this." From his pocket he drew a paper and handed it to Bush, who silently inspected it.

I have always used the Eureka Safety Razor. A shave with a Eureka is as smooth as the caress of your sweetheart's hand upon your cheek.

"What made you think I use a Eureka?" inquired Bush, looking up.

"Oh, that doesn't make any difference," answered Dillman, smiling. "If you sign up that's all I want. It's just a matter of business."

Slowly Bush shook his head.

"I'm much obliged," he said, "but I can't do it."

Mrs. Peale gave him a look of sharp appraisal.

"Mr. Bush," she said, "you're going to be the hero of New York to-morrow, but heroes aren't remembered very long. Now, in order to get this thing settled right away, Mr. Dillman and I will raise our offer to twenty-five hundred, but that is positively our top price. As friend and well-wisher I strongly advise you to accept while the offer is open."

Again Bush shook his head.

"It isn't the money," he said. "It's the idea of the thing."

"If I was you, Bush," said Dillman, in a dry, measured tone, "I wouldn't let that part of it worry me—not when indorsements have been given by the finest people in the country." With the gesture of a showman he indicated Mrs. Peale. "This lady herself is indorsing the Eureka—Mrs. Geoffrey Peale, the leader of New York society."

Bush looked uncomfortable.

"I'm not saying anybody else shouldn't do it," he replied doggedly. "All I'm saying is that *I'm* not going to."

"Why not?" Dillman was plainly impatient.

"I don't know if I can make you understand," said Bush slowly. "You see, I come from a funny little town, and I guess we don't look at things just the way they do in the cities. Anyhow, if I did a thing like this I'd feel sort of—sort of cheap."

"For heaven's sake!" cried Dillman. "You admitted a little while ago you lost everything when that ship sank. You haven't a nickel to your name!"

"That's the point," said Bush. "My name's all I've got, so it looks to me as if I'd better hang onto it."

VI

As the stateroom door closed behind the departing visitors, Bush heard an elaborate yawn from the depths of the bunk across the way.

"Did they wake you, Shorty?" he asked.

"What I ain't able to comprehend," said the invisible Shorty in a ruminative tone, "is what the hell a lady's doing with a razor. Does she shave her husband?"

"The doctor told us we could go on deck this afternoon," said Bush, rising and throwing off his bathrobe. "I want a little of that sun."

From the hip pocket of a pair of wrinkled, salt-stained trousers he drew a flat metal box, small and tarnished, and took from it a safety razor with which he presently began to shave.

"I had a straight razor," remarked Shorty mournfully, "but she went down."

"You can have my safety razor in a minute," said Bush. A slow grin came over his soapy image in the mirror as he added: "It's a Eureka, and believe me, Shorty, a shave with a Eureka is as smooth as the caress of your sweetheart's hand upon your cheek."

"Yeah?" yawned Shorty. "I'll borrow it when you get through."

BORN ON AN ICEBERG

BY CAPTAIN JOHN W. THOMASON, JR.

FROM *Liberty*

CAPTAIN JOHN W. THOMASON, JR.

of the U. S. Marine Corps is the author of "Fix Bayonets," which he also illustrated with his vivid and authentic soldier drawings. As both artist and author he has been a conspicuous figure in our literature since the World War.

HANNE BRYN was a Norwegian girl of Mandal, which is the little fishing haven behind Ryvingen Light, lying on your port hand as you come up from the Skagerrak to the southwest tip of Norway. The place is of the sea. Its houses are built on the seaward slopes of the mountains, and their windows overlook the deep still harbor. Outside, there is always a wind whipping up the North Sea, and the shrill crying of the gulls of the foreshore never ceases at all.

The men of the region have followed blue water as far back as there is any record of them. They sailed with Harald Haarfager and his breed to the outermost coasts of the world, and left their long bones all the way from the Egyptian littoral—where some of them went with Rolf the Red—to Vinland, where they followed Leif Ericson. Today, with the dragon ships and long serpents gone from commission, they put out in Diesel cargo boats.

Their women are sturdy and of great serenity. In the old time, the annals affirm, they were content to stay on the beach and tend the steadings and the home gear while their men were roving, but it is not so now. In this day a Norwegian girl may follow any path she chooses, and public opinion insists that her parents limit their comment to coöperation.

Hanne, at twenty years, was a well-grown woman, with hair the color of new gold kroner, and so agreeably shaped and tinted that all the young men wanted her. But she desired things outside of Mandal, and the thought of a narrow house, a steady man, and accumulating babies did not intrigue her. Her father was *Politi Mester* of Mandal—no mean official—and when she was through the local schools she induced him to send her up to Oslo, to Royal Fredriks University. She was going to study medicine and be a doctor.

At Oslo she had three years of medicine, being distinguished by a certain plodding perseverance in her classes rather than for any particular brilliancy of mind. Then the old *Politi Mester* died, leaving nothing but the pension for Hanne and

her mother. And the pension provided for necessities, but it was emphatically not enough for Hanne's fourth year at the University. The neighbors, who were conservative and did not approve of woman doctors, considered that Hanne might reasonably abandon her fancies, make a selection from the really excellent crop of young men in Mandal, and settle down to raise a family.

But Hanne was own daughter, though a thousand years removed, to the sea wolves who so persistently harried the English coast that they are embalmed in the litany of the English Church to this day; and such people are not easily turned aside from any purpose they have. She went from the funeral up to Oslo to see what could be done. Nursing or hospital work—anything that would add to her experience and help her through her courses to her degree.

A friend on the faculty of Royal Fredriks, earnestly consulted, called to mind the notice received of an opening in Nicaragua, a place, he said, which was on the North American Continent. A Dr. Sanchez out there desired an assistant, qualified for nursing and office work. The salary would be so much. A year's employment, certain conditions being met, of course, was assured.

Hanne found Nicaragua in an atlas, and picked out Bluefields, where the doctor practised. Her friends agreed that an experience in the North American tropics would be interesting and instructive, and doubtless afforded the very best opportunities to study those obscure and little-known tropical diseases so attractive to the profession. Further, the salary (to be paid in gold) exchanged into an impressive number of kroner.

Hanne wrote to the Norwegian consul at Bluefields, and to Dr. Sanchez himself, and the answers were encouraging. She took passage on a leisurely and inexpensive freighter, which eventually set her ashore at El Bluff of Bluefields. The collector of customs in residence, who was Irish and entirely gallant, offered to marry her before her small trunks were sent off to the wharf. He was married already, but his wife was in the States on leave, and for the moment the cool blue light of Hanne's eyes drove that lady from his mind. It was, he explained afterwards with some embarrassment, just his way of paying his compliments and respects.

Her employer, Dr. Cesar Humberto Sanchez, M., was a connection of the great house of Mena, important on the Mosquito Coast, and he was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. He was a small, rabbit-faced gentleman of the pure Spanish stock, immaculate and competent. He had been two years an interne in the New York Polyclinic, and Hanne found his equipment gratifyingly modern and complete. He considered that nothing added so much to a physician's establishment as a personable, starched attendant, who would sort out the patients and sterilize the tools and apply certain sanitary ideas which he had been trained to regard as essential.

When he set up in Bluefields he had imported an American nurse, who served for three weeks and departed by the first available transportation to New Orleans.

"She was disappointed in what the North Americans call the glamour of the tropics," explained Dr. Sanchez, taking his vermuth at the club. "She was annoyed because we had no moving pictures at Bluefields. I am much pleased that she is gone away."

But he found life too short to drill his methods into the local help, and it had been suggested to him that he publish his needs through professional channels in northern Europe, where women have more difficulty in placing themselves in the sciences and are not so critical of opportunity. Immediately it became evident to him that Hanne was an answer to prayer.

The girl had enough English from her schooling to understand his simple directions and to read his medical books, and she picked up Spanish rapidly. The doctor quartered her with the sisters of the Moravian Hospital in Bluefields and wondered how he made out at all before she came. She was a glutton for work and a fanatic at sanitation, and she had no time for the unattached gentlemen of the coast, who drew to her charm like flies, and fell off one by one as they realized that she wasn't interested in hearts unless the stethoscope confirmed the alleged palpitations.

When the august *Coronel* Polycarpo Arguello told her, piteously, that his heart was burning—he was fresh from burying his third wife, and on the prowl—she gravely advised bicarbonate of soda; and to Mr. Ed Simms, mahogany agent, who described disturbing cardiac symptoms, she rec-

ommended *aquavit*, which would, she said, be better for him than the rum he used.

The practice of Dr. Sanchez increased immoderately, and patients came from as far north as Cape Gracias, and from San Juan del Norte, down the other way, and from all the settlements between.

This much of the story I have from my friend, the collector of customs; the rest is from some revolutionists I know, and from the marine officer who rode up into Matagalpa with the admiral's messages when General Miron came across the mountains and carried the war to the West Coast. I saw Hanne Bryn only once.

Our cruiser lay off Bluefields for a week, just before the revolution broke, and one morning, after quarters, the navigator—who is also commander, landing force—and I had permission to go ashore in the captain's gig. The old man was discussing matters of state with the American consul, and we were to look around with an eye to tactical dispositions while he transacted his business.

There is not much to see at Bluefields; the town straggles along a single street on the lagoon, and there is a litter of small boats, numerous drowsy pelicans, and a very bad smell when the tide is low. The matted, swampy jungle of the Mosquito Coast crowds into the back yards of the houses on the landward side, and perhaps two thousand people live there: the Moravian missionaries, a few Spaniards, a few foreigners, and a great many West Indian Negroes, Mosquito Indians, Chinese merchants, and the varicolored mixtures of them all.

We bought some alligator-hide *zapatas* and two salad sets—bowl, spoon, and fork of hand-wrought mahogany, very pleasing to your wife—and met the collector of customs as we came out of the shop. He said that he was going to the club, as was his habit at this hour every morning, and it would be a privilege to offer us such small refreshments as the place afforded. We thought that the captain was safe for an hour, at least, and we were presently seated on the veranda of the club, where we commanded the length of the street and could watch the consul's house for our skipper. Our skipper don't drink, and he never waited for anybody in all his life.

The collector of customs brightened visibly with his second rum swizzle, and laid out the region for us. The town—

"named for the old Dutch pirate, Captain Blauvelt. He used to winter here; he'd send his ships up the Escondido River, which makes into the lagoon over yonder, and the British frigates couldn't get at him, because it's a bad lee shore at that time of the year. That was in Lord Nelson's day. Lord Nelson was a young lieutenant out here, and operated in these waters before anybody ever dreamed of Trafalgar and Lady Emma! Speaking of Lord Nelson—hi! not so much ice in it, boy—did you gentlemen know he was an Irishman? Well, he was, and I'll give you the proofs, which I have in some historical books and so forth in a box over at my house on the bluff. Now, Lord Nelson's father——" The collector of customs dropped Lord Nelson.

A tall girl passed along the street, in crisp starched white that rustled pleasantly as she walked. You noticed the little whispering sound, because in that climate, by midforenoon, people and things are habitually limp, and she was fresh as a mountain flower with the dew on it. She wore a white pith helmet, but we could see that under it was a great mass of honey-colored hair, coiled low on her neck. Her skin, where the sun got at it, was tanned golden to match her hair. A nurse's rig is no aid to beauty, but her body triumphed over the stiff linen. It was a thing of long, lovely lines, with roundness where there should be roundness, and not too much anywhere.

Our uniforms drew one glance from her, and her eyes were wide apart, blue as northern ice, and of astonishing clearness, like a child's. The collector of customs floundered to his feet and bowed, and she gave him a grave smile, and small words in a level voice. We remembered how white her teeth were, and the serenity in the set of her pointed chin. She passed like a cool wind off northern waters, astray in the damp heat of the Mosquito Gulf.

"Who's that? What's that?" we said together, for we had been much in the Latin Americas and expected to see no such vision. The collector of customs watched her out of sight, and then told us about her. But, he concluded, she was one of those cold northern women, born on an iceberg, as the saying is. Before he could go far into particulars our captain emerged from the consul's place, and we had to shove off.

Next day the cruiser went down to Panama, and we were

in the Pacific when the Miron Revolution came to a head and ran like a brush fire along the Mosquito Coast. Another ship was sent up from the Zone to watch it.

There followed considerable fighting around Bluefields, which is the most important port on that side of Nicaragua, and the first objective of all well-conducted revolutions. Tough old General Miron, who was the flame in the heart of the movement, swooped upon the town and captured it, and they reported that the Moravian Hospital was so full of wounded soldiers that their legs were sticking out of the windows. Dr. Sanchez had abundant opportunity to ply his mystery, and Hanne worked day and night. Later, our admiral, executing, no doubt, state instructions too deep for anybody to fathom, steamed up there and declared Bluefields a neutral zone, forbidden to all combatants. When the general, obedient to the force behind the gray ships lying off the bar, gathered his army and marched north along the coast, Dr. Sanchez rode with him, for the doctor, otherwise quite calm, took his politics with passion, and he had been commissioned surgeon-general to the Army of Liberation. And with the doctor went Hanne Bryn, that phœnix-bird of surgical assistants, shifted from whites to khaki breeches and high-laced boots, with a brown sun helmet on her honey-colored hair.

The story goes that Dr. Sanchez, who was *caballero* to the ends of his small fingers, had protested furiously. She should go home—she should go to New Orleans—she should stay with the Moravian sisters and nurse the malaria and dysentery which the army had left behind—but she could never take the field with the soldiers. No white woman had ever done such a thing. It was unheard-of and without precedent, and might conceivably be dangerous.

But Hanne said, having listened courteously until the doctor screamed his voice hoarse, that fighting meant wounded men, and wounded men needed nursing, and she would go. It would be valuable experience toward her doctor's degree. She thought that the surgeon-general had better buy up all the quinine in Bluefields before they started. And bandages. She insisted on lots of bandages. In this also there was the steadfast blood of Harald's men. The general commandeered a pony for her.

The revolution prospered along the east coast, and Miron

crushed one Federal garrison after another all the way up to Puerto Cabezas. But as soon as he took a town, our admiral came on the scene and neutralized it, landing sailors and marines to keep it neutral. The general gathered that the Colossus of the North did not want his Liberals to prosper. He was presently debarred from all the coast, which meant that his sources of supply, the customs receipts and the contributions in money and in kind from the fruit and lumber companies, were lost to him. There was no Federal concentration left east of the mountains, but he was entirely deprived of the fruits of victory.

General Miron was a veteran. He had fought in every revolution since the one raised against Zelaya, back in the early nineteen-hundreds, and he had learned something from each appeal to arms. He knew that he could not fight the United States, and he wasted no time trying to understand its policy, which he considered to be beyond any reasonable man. But he realized that if he sat up one of the rivers, doing nothing, his army would become bored and go home, and his work would fall to pieces in his hands. The outbreak on the West Coast, timed with his efforts in the east, had languished, since the leaders around the capital were not men of capacity.

But if he could move his army, accustomed to victories, across the mountains, effect a combination, and take the capital in reverse—well, there were possibilities. No armed force in the history of the country had ever made the overland march and emerged fit for duty on the other side. There was a matter of two hundred miles, and no roads. Some Indian trails traversed doubtfully the wilderness of the mountains and the jungle, and nobody lived along them. There was no map.

He considered the problem for a day and decided to undertake it. He took his force up the Prinzapolka River to the first rapids, cut across the high savanna to El Gallo on the Rio Grande, impressed the few oxen and mules that he found among the banana plantations to carry his slender stores and the ammunition, and he disappeared from view in the thick country south of Tuma River.

The surgeon-general was almost the only person with whom he discussed his plan, and before they left Prinzapolka, Dr. Sanchez took Hanne aside and honorably discharged her

from the medical service. She refused to be discharged, although he ordered, threatened, and finally wept, for he had come to regard her as superior to most people on earth. No white woman, and very few white men, he pointed out, had ever made the overland march. Himself, he thought the general was crazy, but he could not in honor desert the cause. The idea of a white woman, a señorita, entering that desolation—*ah, Madre de Dios!* Hanne, who was a head taller and perfectly healthy, while the doctor shivered with fever, patted him on the shoulder and said that they must replenish the medical stores; they were nearly out of bandages. And that was that.

Nearly fifteen hundred men and half as many women and children—camp followers—marched out of El Gallo. These soldiers do not move without their women. Until they were west of the mountains there was nothing to be feared from the Federals, and the unhandy column straggled out for kilometers, making little more than its length in the course of a day. The rainy season was upon the land. The rice and beans and jerky went fast, and they ate the oxen as their loads were expended, and the mules. The country afforded almost nothing, and they grubbed for roots beside the trail. They began to die from fever and from exhaustion and from snake bites.

Two weeks out of El Gallo Dr. Sanchez was stricken with an illness which he couldn't himself account for. He had lived all his life in houses, and the trail would have killed him, anyway, he said. But his symptoms were entirely outside of his experience, and he directed Hanne, in his last husky whispers, to make exact notes of the case.

He died, and although Hanne had come to be regarded as some sort of a madonna by the simple Indians, she had great trouble in getting a shallow hole scooped for him and rocks piled over it. She took stock of the medical supplies on hand, and found that the quinine was finished, and that there were no bandages, no iodine, and nothing, in fact, but a few cans of ether and a cone.

They went on, and she worried about the next fight. Gunshot wounds she might manage, for they are mostly small and clean, but *machete* wounds would be a problem. She

wished these people wouldn't use *machetes:* the long blades opened a man so.

She was the only medical person in the column now, and a childbirth by the trail, with assorted cases afterward, kept her mind occupied. It did not occur to her to wonder why she didn't get sick. She had never been sick. Her flesh disappeared, and her fine long bones showed everywhere, and only her eyes remained the same—blue as northern ice, and of an astonishing clearness, like a child's.

Her breeches and her shirt went distressingly to rags, and her weathered sun helmet had become a shapeless mass. She frequently admired her forethought in bringing out from Norway the strong elk-skin boots, made by the hunchbacked cobbler in Mandal. After her pony died and was eaten, she didn't see what she would have done without them.

Hanne lost count of days. But it seemed, after a distressing series of marches, when they were alternately drenched by rain in steaming valleys, and chilled by winds in places where eagles yelped at them, that they were going downhill. The old general closed up his column and began to whip into a semblance of organization the half-naked skeletons who still followed.

Most of them had clung to their rifles, and one day the ammunition was distributed and the animals that carried it killed and eaten. The column halted for a day and a night, while Miron's scouts went ahead, and Negroes and Indians and *mestizos* huddled miserably by very small fires and whispered strange things of their *doctorcita:* she was evidently of a race other than human. In this camp some of them died from pure weariness, with their eyes upon her, dumb as animals. She was conscious of a lessening tension, but her head had begun to ache continually from lack of food.

Miron's scouts came back with the report that a small Federal column, confident and unsuspicious, was no great way off. Miron went on and attacked it, and there was a brisk fight in a valley between two hills, where the country was so thick that shooting was ineffective, and the two forces ran at each other blind and settled the argument with *machetes.*

After it was over, fifty or sixty wounded were collected at a palm-thatched, ruinous shack in a little clearing, and Miron

led every able man off on the heels of the fugitives. He inspired them with the tale that a splendid supply train had followed the Federals, and they were ready to storm the battlements of hell, at that moment, for a bellyful.

He told Hanne that he would send back for her when he could, and meantime she must do what she found possible and let it go at that. His only hope lay in striking quick and hard, before they could concentrate against him, and he must not be cumbered by wounded. Hanne agreed that his judgment was entirely sound. He dismounted from the mule which the late Federal commander had ridden, and took formal leave of her.

They looked each other in the eyes. Both were tall, and the general had been fat at El Gallo. Now he was incredibly emaciated, and the shirt of the late Federal commander hung in folds from his shoulders. Hanne, just as lean in her torn breeches, had nothing womanly about her except her eyes. But the general bowed over her hand as a great gentleman of Spain would bow, and all his words stuck crosswise in his throat, and he rode away. She took stock of the situation.

A few women, who had survived the trail but were too weak to travel further, lay about the shack, as stupid and as useless as cows. The wounded sprawled along in rows. Hanne did not despair for the gunshot wounded. But twenty-odd were slashed and hacked, and needed stitches. She had a few inches of catgut and a single needle, which she used on one man. With the last stitch the needle broke on the fellow's thick hide. It didn't matter, because there was no more gut.

She found a kettle and boiled water, and cleaned up as well as she could. There was a little, very little, food. She set the women, and the men who could sit up, to fighting off the flies. But it was soon evident that only under her eye were the flies molested. Flies were something you put up with: the *doctorcita* was just a little gone in the head—with reason, God knows! . . .

The first night several men died—the ones who would have died anyway—and she dragged their thin bodies off into the brush. If she had bandages—clothes to tear up, anything to cover the wounds, though she could not close them—the others would get well. As it was, she had nothing. . . . And the flies were busy.

That day they heard rifles, kilometers away to the southwest, and afterward, nothing at all. She didn't know where she was, or how far it was to a town, and the men with her were strange to the Matagalpa highland, and could tell her nothing. . . . Miron was stamping triumphantly down through the coffee plantations to the capital, and in Hanne's camp the buzzards shouldered each other along the sagging ridgepole of the shack, waiting patiently. . . . It was the third day, and there were twenty-four men being eaten alive by maggots. . . . The steady, industrious hum of the breeding swarms made an underchord to every other noise.

Hanne walked out a little way, where she could think without looking at the rows of tortured men. She went to her saddlebags, which had belonged to Dr. Sanchez, and got the cans of ether. With a steady hand, making sure that no case would awaken, she put them all under.

Next day the marine officer who told me the last part of this story rode in with an orderly and a guide. He was carrying dispatches from the admiral to Miron, the flagship having come around from the Mosquito Gulf to be on hand when the war reached the Pacific. Nobody knew where Miron was, and the marine had been launched at venture with his orders and a mule.

He had stumbled on this place through following the usual rumors. He says that he will remember Hanne Bryn and her camp of dead after he has forgotten the dressing station in the Vierzy ravine on the second day of the Soissons fight. He says nobody but one of those cold northern women, born on an iceberg, could have gone through with it. Much impressed, he escorted her down to salt water, and turned her over to the Norwegian consul.

Hanne went back to Norway. The best opinion she could get indicated that the country would continue in an unsettled condition for some time, and she concluded to try elsewhere for professional experience and the tuition money against her fourth year at Royal Fredriks. Just where she is, or what she is doing, is not at present known in Nicaragua. But it is said that General Miron has her name down for a monument when he gets around to his program of public works.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

THE LISTS

Before consulting the appended lists, please note the following abbreviations:

Ac.	*Action Stories*
Ad.	*Adventure*
Am.	*American Magazine*
Am. B.	*American Boy* (combined with *Youth's Companion*)
Am. G.	*American Girl*
Am. Merc.	*American Mercury*
Ar.	*Archive*
Am. S. S.	*The American Short Story*
Atl.	*Atlantic Monthly*
B. B.	*Blue Book Magazine*
B. M.	*Black Mask*
B. S.	*Black Swan*
Book.	*Bookman*
Boul.	*Boulevardier*
Brief S.	*Brief Stories*
C.	*Century Magazine* (now a quarterly publication)
C. G.	*Country Gentleman*
C. H.	*College Humor*
C. L.	*College Life*
C. T.	*Chicago Tribune*
C. W.	*Catholic World*
Col.	*Collier's Weekly*
Cow.	*Cowboy Stories*
D.	*Delineator*
D. F.	*Detective Fiction*
D. S. M.	*Detective Stories Magazine*
Elks	*Elks Magazine*
F.	*Forum*
Fr.	*Frontier*
G. H.	*Good Housekeeping*

H.	*Harper's Magazine*
H. B.	*Harper's Bazaar* (formerly, *Bazar*)
H. I. & C.	*Hearst's International and Cosmopolitan Magazine*
H. Merc.	*The Honolulu Mercury*
Hol.	*Holland's*
Home	*The Home Magazine*
House	*The Household Magazine*
L.	*Liberty*
L. H. J.	*Ladies' Home Journal*
M. H.	*Modern Homemaking*
M. H. L.	*Mother's Home Life*
M. 1930	*Miss 1930*
McCall	*McCall's Magazine*
Men.	*Menorah Journal*
Mid.	*Midland*
M. P.	*Modern Priscilla*
Mor.	*The Morada*
Mun.	*Munsey's Magazine*
N. A. R.	*North American Review*
N. Y.	*The New Yorker*
Op.	*Opportunity*
P.	*People's Home Journal*
P. M.	*Parents' Magazine*
P. R.	*Pictorial Review*
P. S. M.	*Prize Story Magazine*
P. T.	*Plain Talk*
Pop.	*Popular*
Pr. S.	*Prairie Schooner*
R.	*Romance* (combined with *Everybody's*)
R. B.	*Red Book Magazine* (now written *Redbook*)
R. D. T.	*Real Detective Tales* (combined with *Mystery Stories*)
R. M. M.	*Railroad Man's Magazine*
S. E. P.	*Saturday Evening Post*
S. E. Q.	*Saturday Evening Quill*
S. S.	*Short Stories*
Scr.	*Scribner's Magazine*
Sea	*Sea Stories*
Smart Set	*Smart Set Magazine*
Strat.	*The Stratford Magazine*
T.	*Top-Notch Magazine*
V. Q. R.	*Virginia Quarterly Review*

W.	*West*
W. H. C.	*Woman's Home Companion*
W. T.	*Weird Tales*
W. V. R.	*The West Virginia Review*
War	*War Stories*
Westm.	*Westminster Gazette*
Y.	*Young's Magazine*
Y. C.	*The Youth's Companion* (now combined with *American Boy*)

N.B. The order is alphabetical by authors; the months August, September, October, November, December are of 1929; the months January, February, March, April, May, June are of 1930.

LIST I

Stories ranking highest:

Aiken, Conrad, No, No, Go Not to Lethe (*Scr.*, Aug.).

Banning, Margaret Culkin, Semi-Precious (*D.*, Oct.); Thursday, December 24 (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 2).

Beer, Thomas, One Never Does (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 11); The Agreeable Finish (*S. E. P.*, June 21).

Benét, Stephen Vincent, The Treasure of Vasco Gomez (*D.*, Feb.); Little Golightly (*Elks*, May).

Bercovici, Konrad, Nina (*McCall*, Nov.); Outcasts (*G. H.*, Mch. 30); The Strong Man of the Lakes (*Am.*, May).

Bradford, Roark, Careless Love (*Col.*, Jan. 4); Come Day, Go Day (*H.*, May).

Brennan, Frederick Hazlitt, The Lost Picture (*L.*, Apr. 19).

Brush, Katharine, Dark Tears (*S. E. P.*, June 21); Ladies with Lipsticks (*S. E. P.*, June 28).

Burnett, W. R., Dressing-Up (*H.*, Nov.); Along the Tracks (*Scr.*, Apr.); The Hunted (*L.*, June 28).

Burt, Katharine Newlin, Herself (*Scr.*, Apr.).

Cary, Lucian, Noblesse Oblige (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 2).

Clements, Colin (See Ryerson, Florence).

Coates, Grace Stone, The Way of the Transgressor (*Fr.*, Nov.).

Cobb, Irvin S., Faith, Hope and Charity (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).

Cohen, Octavus Roy, The Slappeyan Way (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 7); 10,000 Pictures Can't Be Wrong (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 9).

Condon, Frank, Where There's Gold (*Col.*, Mch. 1).
Connell, Richard, King Karney (*Col.*, Sept. 28).
Cooper, Courtney Ryley, The Elephant Forgets (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 1).
Cram, Mildred, Flight (*P. R.*, Aug.).
Curtiss, Philip, Be It Ever So Humble There's No Place Like Jail! (*Am.*, June).

Davis, John, Escape (*Op.*, Mch.).
de Ford, Miriam Allen, The Silver Knight (*Am. S. S.*, Feb.).
Delano, Edith Barnard, Corn Ladies (*Am.*, Oct.).
Dickson, Harris, Black Sheep's Wool (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 12).
Dobie, Charles Caldwell, The Crystal Ball (*H.*, Oct.).
Douglas, Marjory Stoneman, Charcoal (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 11); Plumes (*S. E. P.*, June 14).

Fitzgerald, F. Scott, The Swimmers (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 19).

Gilpatric, Guy, The Great Whiskerino (*Col.*, Apr. 26).
Givens, Colonel, Mammy Ada (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 7).

Hallet, Richard Matthews, Misfortune's Isle (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 9).
Hartley, Roland English, Office Hours (*H.*, Feb.).
Hartman, Lee Foster, Master Builder (*H.*, May).
Held, John, Jr., A Man of the World (*Scr.*, Dec.).
Hergesheimer, Joseph, The Limestone Tree—The Graven Image (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 7).
Houston, Margaret Belle, Rain (*G. H.*, Nov.).

Irwin, Inez Haynes, Night of the Pact (*P. R.*, Mch.).

John, William M., Neither Jew Nor Greek (*C.*, Aug.).
Johnson, Nunnally, Mlle. Irene the Great (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 5).
Johnston, Mary, That Cold (*L. H. J.*, Nov.).

Kahler, Hugh MacNair, Soft Money (*C. G.*, Jan.).
Kyne, Peter B., An Officer—But Not a Gentleman (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.).

Lardner, Ring W., That Old Sweetheart of Mine (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); Mamma (*G. H.*, June).

March, William, The Little Wife (*Mid.*, Jan.-Feb.).
Marquand, John P., The Ships Must Sail (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 16); Jack's the Lad (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 28); Slave Catcher (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 12).
Marquis, Don, The Magic Melody (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 17); Once an Englishman (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 12); O'Meara at Troy (*S. E. P.*, June 21).
Mason, Grace Sartwell, Wings for Mrs. Carter (*W. H. C.*, Jan.).
Matheus, John, Coulév' Endormi (*Op.*, Dec.).

Overbeck, Alice O'Reardon, Encarnación (*H.*, Apr.); Hungry River (*N. A. R.*, June).

Patterson, Frances Taylor, Gesture (*Scr.*, Apr.).
Patterson, Norma, The Christmas That Came Alive (*G. H.*, Jan.).
Pelley, William Dudley, The Continental Angle (*C. T.*, Aug. 4).
Peterkin, Julia, The Diamond Ring (*G. H.*, June).
Preedy, George R., Bagatelle (*Col.*, Aug. 17); Beltarbet's Pride (*Col.*, Dec. 21).

Roberts, Elizabeth Madox, The Sacrifice of the Maidens (*Letters*, May).
Ryerson, Florence, and Clements, Colin, Lobster John's Annie (*Strat.*, Feb.).

Sheean, Vincent, The Ambassador from the United States (*S. E. P.*, June 28).
Singmaster, Elsie, Three Things They Wanted (*D.*, June).
Somerville, A. W., A Tale of the Old Main Line (*S. E. P.*, Dec.14).
Steele, Wilbur Daniel, Quicksilver (*H.*, Aug.); Conjuh (*P. R.*, Oct.); In the Shade of the Tree (*H.*, Jan.); Ki (*P. R.*, Feb.); Wife of a Viking (*P. R.*, Apr.).
Street, Julian, Chameleon (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 16); A Matter of Standards (*Scr.*, Jan.); Christmas in Bagdad (*S. E. P.*, June 14).
Suckow, Ruth, Susan and the Doctor (*H.*, Dec.).

Tarkington, Booth, Miss Dale Learns to Laugh (*L. H. J.*, Nov.); Other People's Children (*Am.*, June).
Thomason, Capt. John W., Born on an Iceberg, (*L.*, Mch. 29).

Titus, Harold, Moment of Glory (*C. G.*, Dec.).
Trites, W. B., Emerson Bennett, Author (*C.*, Spring, 1930).
Troy, Elizabeth, Salad Forks (*Am. S. S.*, Jan.).

Upson, William Hazlett, Lost in the Machinery (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 16); Europe Is Due for a Surprise (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 1).

Wetjen, Albert Richard, Fortitude (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 18).
White, Owen P., Conchita (*Col.*, Oct. 5).
Williams, Ben Ames, Creatures of the Night (*Am.*, Feb.).

Young, Stark, The Poorhouse Goes to the Circus (*Scr.*, Dec.).

LIST II

Stories ranking second:

Abbott, Keene, Flesh of Her Flesh (*Hol.*, Mch.).
Adams, Bill, Able Sailor, Brave and True (*Ad.*, Sept. 1); Who Knows? (*Ad.*, Feb. 15).
Adams, Frank R., Alibis for Two (*R. B.*, June).
Adams, Samuel Hopkins, Tourists Accommodated (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.).
Addington, Sarah, Hands Across the Atlantic (*D.*, Sept.); Money Isn't Everything (*G. H.*, Oct.); Uncle Sam's Missus (*D.*, Feb.); Love Me, Love My Queenie (*G. H.*, June).
Akers, Arthur K., Wolf! Wolf! (*R. B.*, Feb.); Bloodhound for a Night (*R. B.*, Mch.); Lumbago on the Left (*R. B.*, Apr.).
Alexander, R. W., Carmencita (*R.*, Nov.).
Allen, Sallie Elliott, Warp and Woof (*Fr.*, Jan.).
Anderson, Frederick Irving, The Door Key (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 28); Madame the Cat (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 29).
Anderson, Sherwood, In a Strange Town (*Scr.*, Jan.).
Andrews, Mary R. S., The White Satin Dress (*Scr.*, Aug.).
Annixter, Paul, The Throne Among the Winds (*Elks*, Sept.).
Arbuckle, Mary, The Man from Oregon (*McCall*, Mch.).
Aswell, James, The Belle of Calomega (*Col.*, Apr. 12).
Avery, Stephen Morehouse, The Kiwi Cross (*Col.*, Dec. 7); The Spotter (*Col.*, Dec. 28); Beauty and the Banker (*Col.*, May 31).

Baldwin, Faith, Traffic Jam and Applesauce (*L.*, Aug. 10).
Bailey, F. E., Kiss of April (*H. I. and C.*, May).

Banning, Margaret Culkin, The Generous Thing (*H. B.*, Sept.).
Barretto, Larry, Escape (*R.*, Oct.).
Bartlett, Frederick Orin, The Sieve of the Gods (*G. H.*, Feb.).
Beach, Rex, The Public Wife (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.); Fourth Offense (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.).
Beatty, Jerome, Catfish Wiggins Comes Through (*Col.*, Aug. 24); The Yodeling Lady (*Col.*, Nov. 2); Catfish Wiggins Tries the Planets (*Col.*, Dec. 21); We Were Young Once (*Col.*, Jan. 18); Texas Good Girl (*Col.*, Mch. 29); The Seventh Girl (*Am.*, May); The One-Man Pigeon (*Col.*, May 3); Catfish Hangs a Horseshoe (*Col.*, May 24).
Bechdolt, Frederick, Bad Men and Good (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.).
Beer, Thomas, Life Is an Art (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 10); Hexensabbath (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 7); Sanity (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 7); Where the Heart Is (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 8); Cherries (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 22); Intrusion (*S. E. P.*, May 10); Rose Plaster (*S. E. P.*, June 14).
Bellah, James Warner, Chorus Girl (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 26); Mr. Fentriss Sails at Six (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 15); Mr. Picarelli Takes a Bath (*S. E. P.*, May 17).
Benedict, Libbian, Fledgling (*H.*, Apr.).
Bercovici, Konrad, Zaila (*L. H. J.*, May).
Bishop, Helen, The Better Thing (*P. R.*, Mch.).
Bliss, Tip, Nowhere in France (*War*, Jan. 30).
Blochman, L. G., Sixty Thousand Singapore Dollars (*Ad.*, Aug. 15).
Bolton, Frances, No Fare (*L.*, Apr. 19).
Boulton, Agnes, En Route (*L.*, Feb. 22).
Bowles, George, The Ten Tin Cans (*H.*, Nov.).
Bradford, Roark, The Indian Summer of Bugaboo Jones (*Col.*, Sept. 14); Crazy Gal (*Col.*, Oct. 19); The Rambling Rouster (*Col.*, Nov. 9); The Mule Man (*Col.*, Nov. 30).
Brady, Mariel, For Tomorrow We Die—t. (*G. H.*, Oct.); The High Cost of Giving (*G. H.*, Jan.).
Brand, Anna, Filiberta Has a Baby (*D.*, Sept.); Thief of Salvation (*D.*, May).
Brennan, Frederick Hazlitt, Press Agents, Please Copy (*L.*, Aug. 17); Also the Sport of Queens (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 24); "Unsolved" (*L.*, Dec. 14); Talk About Justice! (*R. B.*, Feb.); The Girl He Left Behind (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 29).
Brereton, Charles V., The Scent of Vengeance (*B. B.*, Nov.).
Bromfield, Louis, City Romance (*R. B.*, Oct.).

Bronson, F. W., The Shoestring Marriage (*Col.*, Nov. 9); Dollar Worship (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 23); The Barnacle (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 21).

Brooks, George S., A Dietetic Decree (*Am. S. S.*, Jan.).

Brooks, Jonathan, Horse for Todd (*Elks*, May).

Brown, Bernice, Desperate Measures (*R.*, Jan.); One Perfect Thing (*R. B.*, Mch.).

Browne, Porter Emerson, and Smyth, Joseph Hilton, From Caviar to Cointreau (*H. B.*, Sept.).

Brubaker, Howard, The Professor Looks at Barbara (*Scr.*, Oct.); A Needle in a Haystack (*Am.*, May); Extra Performance (*Col.*, June 7).

Brush, Katharine, Town Girl (*P. R.*, Sept.); Sing for Your Supper (*R. B.*, Sept.).

Buckley, F. R., Of Diversion (*Ad.*, June 15).

Burgess, Gelett, Up the Spout (*Col.*, Dec. 14).

Burnet, Dana, A Young Man in Peril (*Col.*, Aug. 10); Bus Driver's Dream (*Col.*, Mch. 22); Won't You Be William? (*Col.*, Apr. 26).

Burt, Katharine Newlin, Pied Piper of Circle Ranch (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); How Different from Us (*C. T.*, Nov. 3); A Space of Flowers (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 16); When the Wind Blows (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.); The Longest Way Round (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 26).

Burt, Struthers, The House of Beauty (*P. R.*, May).

Butler, Ellis Parker, Luce and Lucy (*W. H. C.*, Aug.); "Hitch-Hike" (*C. T.*, Oct. 20); New Plumes for Old (*Am.*, Nov.); Mr. Jern's Ambition (*W. H. C.*, Apr.); Real Money (*L.*, Apr. 26).

Carman, Dorothy Walworth, Boys Will Be Boys (*W. H. C.*, Aug.).

Carr, Robert S., Bright Young Laughter (*R.*, Aug.).

Cary, Lucian, The Way They Don't Care (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 16); How to Be a Lion (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 18); Who's Got the Baby? (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 8); Should She Have Told Him? (*Col.*, June 7).

Cassidy, Jane, Lovers Talk at Twilight (*L.*, June 21).

Clark, Everett H., Navy Yard Gate (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 21); Spare Part (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 18).

Coates, Grace Stone, Glass (*Mid.*, Jan.-Feb.); The Corn Knife (*Fr.*, Mch.).

Coatsworth, Elizabeth, Kous-Kous (*Atl.*, Mch.).
Cobb, Irvin S., Judge Priest's Funeral (*H. I. and C.*, June).
Coburn, Walt, Salud, Señor! (*Ad.*, Jan. 1).
Coe, Charles Francis, Swordsmen of the Sea (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 26).
Cohen, Octavus Roy, The Party of the Worst Part (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 15); The Loan Wolf (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 1); Comin' Through the Sky (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 8); Supe and Fish (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 29); The Diamond Cleek (*Col.*, Apr. 26); They Also Serve (*McCall*, June).
Colby, Merle, The Gambolier (*Atl.*, Jan.).
Colohan, John E., The Lost Punch (*Ad.*, Sept. 1).
Condon, Frank, Love Letters (*Col.*, Oct. 26); The Hypnotic Widow (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 16); Tour Conductor (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 9); The Smuggler's Bride (*S. E. P.*, May 10).
Connell, Richard, Funny Man (*P. R.*, Nov.); If I Was Alone with You (*Col.*, Nov. 30); The Wolf and the Lamb (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 28).
Connolly, James B., Papaya (*C. W.*, Feb.); Procedure (*Scr.*, Feb.); The Captain's Holiday (*Col.*, Mch. 22); When There Was Danger (*Col.*, May 31).
Cooper, Courtney Ryley, Over the River (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 28); Sunday on the Lot (*Col.*, Jan. 18); The Life of Squawking Bill (*Col.*, Feb. 15); Shake-Down (*Col.*, June 28).
Cooper, Edgar L., The Sergeant Takes Off (*S. S.*, Aug. 10).
Corcoran, William, Landlady (*D.*, Oct.).
Cowley, Irene, "One More Saved" (*P. T.*, Jan.).
Cram, Mildred, It's My Birthday (*D.*, Mch.).
Cranston, Claudia, Women and Misses (*G. H.*, Apr.); The Way of All Chiffon (*G. H.*, June).
Craven, Margaret, The Giraffe's Neck (*C. H.*, Feb.); Cake for the Peacocks (*D.*, June).
Creel, George, The Deep Yellow (*Elks*, Oct.).
Crowell, Chester T., A Petition for Pardon (*Col.*, Apr 19).
Curtiss, Philip, The Eight-Dollar Pup (*H.*, Feb.).

Dale, Virginia, The Lipstick Stain (*R. B.*, Apr).
Davies, Oma Almona, The Mongler (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 12); From Cradle to Grave Yet (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 1).
Davis, Elmer, The Jinx and the Phyllis (*H.*, Apr.); There Is a Tide (*Elks*, June); You Can't Be Modern (*W. H. C.*, June).
Davis, Howard Ellis, The Man Who Was Forgotten (*Ad.*, June 1).

Davis, H. L., The Brown Stallion (*Am. Merc.*, Sept.).
Davis, Mary Lee, Eskimo Butterfly (*Scr.*, Sept.).
Davron, Mary Clare, As It Happens in Hollywood (*D.*, Nov.); Flannel Nighties (*Hol.*, Apr.).
Dealey, Ted, A Bird Lover (*Hol.*, Apr.).
de Ford, Miriam Allen, Beth and Alveeda (*Am. S. S.*, Apr.).
Delano, Edith Barnard, The River (*C. G.*, Nov.).
Delmar, Viña, Story (*L.*, May 3); Elopement (*R. B.*, June).
Detzer, Karl W., The Meteor (*N. A. R.*, Mch.).
DeVoto, Bernard, The Penalties of Wisdom (*R. B.*, Sept.); The Long Chance (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 19).
Dickson, W. Lee, A Manhattan Fantasy (*P. R.*, Apr.).
Dinsmore, Reg, The Dog of It (*B. B.*, Feb.).
Dobie, Charles Caldwell, The Daughter of a Princess (*H.*, June); Birds of a Feather (*W. H. C.*, June).
Douglas, Marjory Stoneman, The Man Who Was Homesick (*House.*, Oct.).
Downing, Hyatt, The First Illusion (*Scr.*, May).
Driscoll, Louise, Captain Abner (*H. M.*, Mch.).
Drummond, David, "No Spik Engleesh" (*War.*, Jan. 30).
Dunn, Violette Kimball, A Break for Thespis (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 16); Carolyn Plays with Fire (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 11).

Edmonds, Walter D., The Old Jew's Tale (*F.*, Aug.).
Ellerbe, Alma and Paul, Nancy Opens the Door (*C. T.*, Nov. 24).
Elston, Allan Vaughan, Drawing Room B (*Ad.*, Apr. 15).
Engle, William I., The Web (*Am. S. S.*, Jan.).
Erskine, John, The Patience of Griselda (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.); The Sleeping Beauty (*H. I. and C.*, June).

Finn, Mary M., The Dingbat and the Debutante (*L.*, June 21).
Fitzgerald, Edith, Seconds (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 29).
Fleming, Ethel, The Masque of Tragedy (*P. S. M.*, Feb.).
Foote, Robert Ordway, It Won't Be Long Now (*T.*, 1st Oct. No.).
Frazier, Neta Lohnes, Story Makin's (*Fr.*, Jan.).
Friel, Arthur O., Red Giants (*Ad.*, Dec. 15).

Gaither, Frances, A Morning in Spring: Quay Malaquais (*N. A. R.*, Mch.).
Gale, Zona, Brendy (*Am.*, Feb.).
Gatlin, Dana, The Blood-Red Ruby (*H. B.*, Jan.).

Gelzer, Jay, Entirely Happy (*G. H.*, Oct.).
Gerould, Katharine Fullerton, The Centipede (*H.*, Aug.).
Gilkyson, Walter, Blue Sky (*Scr.*, Nov.).
Gillespie, Jean, The Dagger of Sheik Abd-el-Kadir (*Hol.*, Nov.).
Gilman, G. Laselle, The Return (*Pr. S.*, Summer, 1929).
Gilpatric, Guy, The Sawdust Psychic (*L.*, Aug. 24); Lulu Was a Lady (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 17).
Givens, Colonel, Dingo John (*S. E. P.*, May 17); Dixie Lad (*S. E. P.*, June 28).
Glass, Montague, You Ought to See a Doctor (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.); And That Is What Mr. Bieber Left! (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); The Pant House (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).
Glenn, Isa, The Penthouse (*H. B.*, Dec.); Lunar Enchantments (*H. B.*, Mch.).
Godin, Alexander, Birth (*Men.*, Nov.).
Goldman, Raymond Leslie, A Good Name (*P. R.*, Dec.).
Goodloe, Abbie Carter, The One-Story Man (*Scr.*, Dec.).
Gordon, Eugene, Crazy Jesus (*S. E. Q.*, Annual, June, 1930).
Graeve, Oscar, Portrait of a Husband (*Col.*, Apr. 5).
Graham, Dorothy, The Choice of the Wind (*C. W.*, Feb.).
Green, Walton, Sally of the C. O. S. (*L.*, Aug. 10).
Gross, Milt, What Is Your Job? (*L.*, Apr. 12).

Hale, Agnes Burke, Counsel Retained (*S. E. P.*, May 17).
Hall, Wilbur, La Estrella (*H. I. and C.*, May).
Hallet, Richard Matthews, Demons of the Sand (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 31); The Earthquake (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 1); Zimbolaci's Daughter (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 29).
Hamill, Stuart, Words of Steel (*War*, Sept. 26).
Hanlon, Brooke, Zone of Fragrance (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 26); Geranium Wells (*McCall*, Nov.); Longhorn (*S. E. P.*, May 17).
Hare, Amory, A Face at the Door (*H. B.*, Dec.).
Harris, Kennett, The Sacred Truth (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 22).
Hartley, Roland English, The Last Work of Norman Kane (*Fr.* Nov.); Transient Boarder (*Fr.*, Jan.); In the Park (*Fr.*, Mch.); After All (*H.*, June).
Hartwick, Mary Hesse, Tony and Marcia (*Fr.*, Jan.).
Havermale, Hazel, Merry-Go-Round (*G. H.*, Feb.); Love Is Like That (*G. H.*, May).
Hawk, John, Murderers Shouldn't Overlook Little Things! (*Scr.*, Feb.).

Haycox, Ernest, The Old Army Game (*S. S.*, Aug. 25); Pistol Gap (*S. S.*, Jan. 10).
Healy, Thomas F., Tim the Tinker (*C. W.*, Sept.).
Held, John, Jr., A Touch of Paradise (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).
Hemphill, Mary Louise, And Such a Song (*P.*, Aug.).
Henney, Keith, Through Keeweenaw (*Sea*, Dec.).
Hepburn, Elizabeth Newport, It Began in Italy (*Hol.*, Sept.).
Hergesheimer, Joseph, The Limestone Tree—The Rose Arbor (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 1); The Limestone Tree—The Lincoln Gun (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 29); The Limestone Tree—Ladies in Nashville (*S. E. P.*, May 31).
Hess, Leonard, The Pending Rope (*Am.*, Feb.).
Hiemstra, Mary, Wooden Legs (*Fr.*, Mch.).
Holmes, Janet A., Aunt Emmeline Takes an Interest (*Scr.*, Aug.).
Houston, Margaret Belle, White Christmas (*P. R.*, Dec.); Witch-Woman (*Hol.*, Feb.); The Jazz Heart (*Col.*, Feb. 15).
Hughes, James Perley, "Sho Am Da'k" (*War*, Feb. 13).
Hughes, Rupert, Lovely Liar (*H. I. and C.*, May).
Hurst, Fannie, Carrousel (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.).
Huse, Harry G., High Tension (*Fr.*, Nov.).
Huston, McCready, Solid Citizen (*H.*, Mch.).

Irwin, Inez Haynes, Tattle-Tale (*C.*, Aug.); Freesia (*Am.*, Sept.); The Galleon (*W. H. C.*, Dec.).
Irwin, Wallace, All for Bud (*W. H. C.*, Feb.).
Irwin, Will, Mary Resigns (*Am.*, Nov.).
Isaacs, Bryna R., Maybe (*Hunter College Echo*, Graduation No., 1930).

Jackson, Margaret Weymouth, The First Witness (*C. G.*, Dec.); The Polished Engine (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 15); Drive Away (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 1).
Jacobs, Marguerite, Driving Mists (*McCall*, Mch.).
Jerard, Elise, Pot Roast Rosie (*P. R.*, Sept.); One Knight Off (*P. R.*, Mch.).
Johnson, Earnestine Gunn, A Ticket to Norway (*Hol.*, Nov.).
Johnson, Nunnally, One Meets Such Interesting People (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 30); A Victim of the War (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 21); The Burglar's Bride (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 12); Twenty Horses (*S. E. P.*, May 17).
Johnston, Mary, Buried Silver (*L. H. J.*, Sept.).

Kahler, Hugh MacNair, Berserk (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 24).
Kelland, Clarence Budington, Boomerang (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 17); The Bleating of the Lamb (*L. H. J.*, Sept.); Sardines (*S. E. P.*, Dec.); "You Have to Have Vision" (*Am.*, Jan.); Alter Ego (*S. E. P.*, May 17); Scattergood Strikes Out to See the World (*Am.*, June).
Keller, David H., Creation Unforgivable (*W. T.*, Apr.).
Kellogg, Grace, Nothing Else Matters (*W. H. C.*, Jan.).
Kennedy, John B., Behind Closed Doors (*Col.*, Nov. 9).
Kerr, Sophie, Elsie and Jane (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 12); Eddie and Walter (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 11); Double Play (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 8); Honesty (*W. H. C.*, June).
Knibbs, Henry Herbert, Tonto Charley (*Ad.*, Aug. 15).
Knight, Clifford, The Wild Calahan Boy (*C. G.*, Oct.); Back Water (*C. G.*, Apr.).
Kyne, Peter B., Ride, Rope and Dog (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.); The Last Word (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.); Mitherless (*R. B.*, June).

La Mar, Bud, The Escape of Fiddleface Dugan (*S. S.*, June 10).
Lamb, Harold, The Faring Forth (*Ad.*, Nov. 15).
Lambert, Reita, An Almost Total Loss (*C. T.*, Jan. 26); A Paris Bargain (*McCall.*, Apr.).
Lane, Rose Wilder, Winding Road (*L. H. J.*, Nov.)
Lane, Louise, Afterglow (*Y.*, Jan.).
Lardner, Ring W., Pity Is Akin—(*H. I. and C.*, Sept.).
Larsen, Nella, Sanctuary (*F.*, Jan.).
Larsson, Genevieve, Blue Chords (*D.*, Oct.).
Lefévre, Edwin, The Dealer in Certainties (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 16).
Leinster, Murray, Boots (*Ad.*, Aug. 15).
Le May, Alan, Tombstone's Daughter (*Col.*, May 31).
Leslie, Hal Field, Crucible (*Am.*, Dec.).
Lewis, Sinclair, Youth (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.).
Lincoln, Freeman, Steel (*G. H.*, May).
Littell, Edmund M., Crucible (*Ad.*, Sept. 15); The Small Voice (*Ad.*, Feb. 15).
Lloyd, Nelson, Very Old McAdam (*N. A. R.*, May).
Longman, Anne, Claytie (*W. H. C.*, Oct.).
Luther, Mark Lee, The White Elephant (*Hol.*, Nov.).

McBlair, Robert, Wilbur Julius Brushes By (*M. P.*, May).
McCoy, Horace, Dirty Work (*B. M.*, Sept.).

McCoy, Samuel, One of the Best (*Col.*, Aug. 31).
McEvoy, J. P., Father's Day (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.).
McGehee, Florence Wheeler, Pin Feathers (*Am. S. S.*, Jan.).
McKay, Muriel Nichols, Peacock (*Fr.*, Mch.).
McKenna, Edward L., Gentlemen Are Reckless (*W. H. C.*, June).
McMorrow, Thomas, Opal and Crystal (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 23); Sold Out (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 25); Mr. Murphy of New York (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 22).
McNutt, William Slavens, Enjoy Fortune and Forget It (*R. B.*, Feb.).
Mabie, Louise Kennedy, The Artificial Moon (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 23); Inventory (*S. E. P.*, May 24).
MacAlarney, Robert E., The Camera Kid (*Home*, April).
March, Joseph Moncure, Evening at Home (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.,.
March, William, The Dappled Fawn (*Pr. S.*, Winter, 1930).
Marquand, John P., The Best Must Always Go (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 10); Captain Whetstone (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 24); A Dog, a Woman (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 5); Bobby Shaftoe (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 8.).
Marquis, Don, The Diary of Freckles Watson (*Scr.*, Dec.).
Martin, Thornton, Salvage (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 21).
Mauck, Hilda, The Soul Saver (*R. B.*, Oct.); Broken Date (*R. B.*, Mch.).
Mayo, Katherine, The Little Waif of Karma (*H. I. and C.*, May).
Mechem, Kirke, The Battle Sonata (*N. A. R.*, June).
Mercein, Eleanor, Hombre de Amor (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 31); The Diddikai (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 30).
Millar, Ronald, The Other Man's Wife (*C. T.*, Sept. 15).
Miller, Alice Duer, Mother Wit (*Am.*, Apr.).
Miller, Dorothy, The Countess of Kanawha (*Hol.*, June).
Miller, Helen Topping, Cold Potato (*Y.*, Aug.); A Necktie for Father (*P. R.*, Feb.).
Miller, Jil, The Runner in the Desert (*Strat.*, Mch.).
Miller, Laura, Pride of Possession (*W. H. C.*, Mch.).
Miller, Warren Hastings, Cyrano of the Legion (*B. B.*, Feb.).
Minor, Norton, Phillippa Comes to My House (*Scr.*, Nov.).
Mintzer, L. Murney, Pants (*Ad.*, Sept. 15).
Mintzer, Murney, Live Steam (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 25).
Mitchell, Ruth Comfort, Exceptionally Nice People (*W. H. C.*, Oct.).
Mizner, Wilson, "You're Dead" (*L.*, May).

Montross, Lynn, Nothing Ever Happens Here (*Col.*, Dec. 28).
Montross, Lynn and Lois, The Incomplete Angler (*C. H.*, Aug.).
Moore, Olga, No Place Like Home (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 12).
Morris, Gouverneur, Brazil—A Tale of the Late Nineties (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 8); Pearls (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).
Morrison, Denis A., Home to Roost (*L.*, Mch. 1).

Nason, Leonard H., Prisoners at the Steak (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 8).
Naylor, Lieut.-Col. Charles J., Pay-Day (*P. T.*, Aug.).
Needham, Elizabeth, The Horse That Saw a Ghost (*Fr.*, Mch.).
Nelson, Edna Deu Pree, Brothers (*C.*, Autumn).
Newsom, J. D., Let Him Die by the Knife! (*S. S.*, Sept. 15).
Norris, Kathleen, Gay Deceivers (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.).
Norton-Taylor, Duncan, Beautiful But Young (*McCall*, June).

Oliver, Jennie Harris, The Dark Mountains (*G. H.*, Sept.); Reddy (*G. H.*, Dec.); The Flame (*Hol.*, Mch.).
Olson, Ted, Prelude to a Picaresque Novel (*Fr.*, May).
O'Neill, Rose, The Heavenly House (*G. H.*, Dec.).
Orr, Edith, Miss Loop (*N. A. R.*, May).
Owen, Louise, Situation (*P. T.*, Aug.).

Pelley, William Dudley, The Great Alone (*Hol.*, Oct.).
Perkins, Dorothy, Diplomacy (*Col.*, Nov. 23).
Perry, Jennings, Stunt Stuff (*Hol.*, June).
Perry, Lawrence, Day of Memories (*L. H. J.*, May).
Perry, Ralph R., Hate (*Ad.*, Nov. 1); The Goat (*Ad.*, May 15).
Peterkin, Julia, Heart Leaves (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 5).
Petersen, Elizabeth Benneche, The Sea Was Waiting (*G. H.*, Nov.); Stars for Your Dreams (*G. H.*, Apr.).
Pierce, James A., The Mistake (*Op.*, Sept.).
Pinkerton, Robert E., Velvet (*Mun.*, Sept.).
Porter, Rebecca N., Bought (*Hol.*, Apr.).
Post, Melville Davisson, The Mystery at the Mill (*Am.*, Aug.); The Witness in the Metal Box (*Am.*, Nov.).
Putnam, Nina Wilcox, Speak for Yourself (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.).

Raine, Norman Reilly, Pariah (*S. E. P.*, Nov.); The Chief of the Pegasus (*B. B.*, Feb.).

Randall, Letitia Preston, Jolly Boy (*H.*, Aug.); Rhapsody in Mauve (*H.*, May).
Riley, Ethel, Dark Laughter (*Op.*, Aug.).
Rinehart, Alan, Parson's Cove (*L.*, May 31).
Rinehart, Mary Roberts, The Old Man Cleans His Revolver (*H. I. and C.*, Aug.); The Oyster Has a Mouth (*S. E. P.*, June 28).
Risley, Eleanor, Cleanin' up the County (*Atl.*, Mch.).
Robinson, Lee, Gathering Clouds (*Am. S. S.*, Mch.).
Roche, Arthur Somers, She'll Never Know (*Col.*, Oct. 5).
Roe, Vingie E., Desert Bloom (*McCall*, Aug.); Black Heart of Panther Mountain (*P. R.*, Oct.); A Wilderness Equation (*P. R.*, June).
Ross, Lyman L., Plans (*Pr. S.*, Summer, 1929).
Ross, Mary Lowrey, The Compleat Wangler (*S. E. P.*, May 24).
Runyon, Damon, Dark Dolores (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.).
Rushfeldt, Elise M., A Coffin for Enoch (*Fr.*, May).
Ryan, Stella, Marcella and Her Spaniard (*P. R.*, Aug.); If You Begin with Love (*G. H.*, Nov.).

Sanborn, Ruth Burr, Anne Paradise, M. R. S. (*Smart Set*, May); Sing a Song of Symptoms (*Col.*, June 14).
Sangster, Margaret E., Who Have Dared to Own It (*Hol.*, Nov.); Quest (*D.*, Jan.); The Crowded Room (*G. H.*, Apr.).
Sar, Guy, The Cholo (*P. T.*, Aug.); The Cholo Goes Gambling (*P. T.*, Dec.); The Cholo Flowers Out (*P. T.*, Jan.).
Saroyan, William, Escaped by Steerage (*Fr.*, May).
Sass, Herbert Ravenel, Ki of the Winds (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 22).
Saxon, Lyle, The Gay Dangerfields (*C.*, Aug.).
Scobee, Barry, The Idol-Chaser (*W. T.*, Aug.).
Scoville, Samuel, Jr., Yellow Bear (*C. G.*, Mch.).
Seewerker, Joe, Marine Chops (*War*, Jan.).
Seifert, Shirley, The Masterpiece (*House*, Apr.).
Shannon, Robert Terry, Old Dominion (*C. G.*, Nov.); Vacation (*Col.*, Mch. 8).
Sheean, Vincent, The Parrot (*C.*, Aug.).
Shenton, Edward, The Girl Who Won the War (*Scr.*, Jan.).
Singmaster, Elsie, In Twelve Hours (*McCall*, Jan.); A Slip of the Tongue (*W. H. C.*, June).
Skerry, Frederick, In Terms of Business (*Col.*, Dec.).
Slesinger, Tess, Mother to Dinner (*Men.*, Mch.).

Smith, Beverly, Holy Night (*L.*, Dec. 28).
Smith, Gordon Arthur, The Last Laugh (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 30); The Pearl Necklace (*H.*, Jan.).
Smith, H. M. K., The Smile of Buddha (*N. A. R.*, Mch.).
Smith, Wallace, Doubling for Cupid (*H. I. and C.*, Aug.).
Somerville, A. W., A Curve Around the Eight Ball (*C. H.*, Feb.).
Springs, Elliott White, The One Who Was Clever (*R. B.*, Aug.); Confirmations (*L.*, Jan. 4); Twins (*L.*, Apr. 26).
Squier, Emma-Lindsay, The Last Emperor (*G. H.*, Oct.); The Caprice of the Queen (*R. B.*, Jan.); Forgotten Firefly (*L. H. J.*, Mch.); Drums of the Yaqui (*C. G.*, Apr.).
Stait, Virginia, My Faith—and My Unfaith (*Ar.*, Oct.); In India Ink: Eastern Measure for Western Measure (*Westm.* Mch.).
Stallings, Lawrence, Return of Pan (*H. I. and C.*, May).
Stanley, May, A Sailor Comes Home (*G. H.*, Apr.).
Stearns, Martha Genung, What I Saw (*C. W.*, May).
Steele, Wilbur Daniel, Surorise (*P. R.*, Sept.).
Stiles, Pauline, Whiter Than Snow (*P. M.*, Mch.).
Stone, Elinore Cowan, Rescue the Parishing (*Hol.*, Mch.).
Strain, Madeleine, The Professor Steps Out (*Home*, Apr.).
Street, Julian, Bull Market (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 18).
Stribling, T. S., Luck (*Ad.*, Sept. 15); Nebo (*Ad.*, May 1); Mogglesby (*Ad.*, June 1).
Suckow, Ruth, Home-Coming (*G. H.*, Aug.); Sunset Camp (*H.*, Nov.).
Swan, Mark, The Man Who Couldn't Forget (*Col.*, Nov. 23).
Synon, Mary, Grand Piano (*G. H.*, Nov.); The Barbarian (*G. H.*, Jan.); If I Were Your Age (*G. H.*, Apr.).

Taft, Clara Maxwell, Emma and Angela (*McCall*, Sept.).
Tarkington, Booth, Pansy Dale and Patsy Dorker (*L. H. J.*, Aug.); Belinda Moves Up (*L. H. J.*, Sept.).
Tarleton, Fiswoode, The Shame (*Book.*, Dec.).
Terhune, Albert Payson, Detective Ranter (*C. G.*, Aug.); Thor and Old Henry (*C. G.*, Oct.); Cephas (*R. B.*, Jan.); The Psychology Pup (*L. H. J.*, May).
Terrill, Lucy Stone, Laugh or Leave (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 2).
Thibault, David, Rat Trap (*Col.*, May 3).
Thomas, Dorothy, The Fightin'est Woman (*Am. S. S.*, Mch.); Three Blue Doves (*Scr.*, Oct.).

Thomas, Kenneth Champion, The Ironic Star (*Sea.*, Dec.).
Tompkins, Juliet Wilbor, Copy (*D.*, Aug.).
Torgerson, Edwin Dial, Detour to Rome (*Hol.*, Feb.); Retrieved! (*C. T.*, Feb. 16).
Turnbull, Agnes Sligh, Mary and Joseph (*McCall*, Dec.).

Upson, William Hazlett, The Beautiful Red Wagon (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 14); Everything Was All Tied Up (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 11); Monument Historique (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 15); Working on the Railroad (*S. E. P.*, June 21).

Vaka, Demetra, The Pangs of Success (*H. B.*, Jan.).
Vance, Louis Joseph, The Strange Man (*Hol.*, May).
Vandercook, John W., Funk (*H.*, Sept.).
Van Dine, S. S., Fool! (*H. I., and C.* Jan.).
Van Vorst, Marie, Thief in Love (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.).
Vorse, Mary Heaton, In Tangier (*H.*, Dec.); Mudguards (*D.*, Apr.).

Waldo, Sidney, Twenty Years (*Col.*, Dec.).
Ward, Francis, David Follows After (*House*, Nov.).
Ward, Millard, Sea Pride (*Col.*, May 24).
Watkins, Mary F., The End of the Rope (*S. E. P.*, May 31).
Watkins, Richard Howells, The Smuggler's Crown (*Mun.*, Sept.).
Way, Isabel Stewart, Day's End (*P. R.*, Apr.).
Wead, Frank, Panama Liberty (*Am.*, May).
Weiman, Rita, Youth and Beauty (*L.*, Dec. 21); On Your Back (*L.*, Feb. 22); The Dead Hand (*P. R.*, May); We Meet Again (*L.*, May 10).
Welles, Harriet, Strange Ships (*W. H. C.*, Mch.).
Wembridge, Eleanor Rowland, Keep It Exclusive! (*Am. Merc.*, Oct.).
Wertenbaker, Charles, Honor (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 3).
West, Dorothy, Funeral (*S. E. Q.*, Annual, June, 1930).
Wetjen, Albert Richard, Salvage (*S. S.*, Jan. 10).
White, Stewart Edward, The Shepper-Newfounder (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 29).
Whitehead, Henry S., The Shut Room (*W. T.*, Apr.).
Willets, Eliza, Coast Lights (*W. H. C.*, Aug.).

Wiley, Hugh, Chinaman's Chance (*Col.*, Nov. 23); Long Time No See (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 15).
Williams, Alan, Three Who Returned (*Y.*, Aug.).
Williams, Ben Ames, The Wild Ones (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 17); The Happy House (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 14); A Prudent Man (*Col.*, Oct. 5); Touch (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 9); The Death Apple (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 14); Immune (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 11); Man Afraid (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 26).
Willson, Dixie, Miss Coney Island (*D.*, Feb.).
Winslow, Thyra Samter, Ida (*P. R.*, May).
Wood, Quintan, The Boxer (*Am.*, Feb.).
Woodford, Jack, Paladin (*P. T.*, Feb.).
Woody, Regina J., A Star for a Night (*Col.*, Dec. 7).
Worts, George F., Solo (*Smart Set*, May).

Zeimer, Gregor, The Zeppelin Spy (*T.*, Mch. 15).

LIST III

Stories ranking third:
Adams, Bill, Solomon and the Bright Pearl (*Ad.*, Jan 1); Bully of the "Sirocco" (*Sea*, Apr.).
Adams, Frank R., So Few Days Left (*L.*, Aug. 24); The Long Minute (*R. B.*, Sept.); Perfume of Memory (*R.*, Sept.); Straight Line Story (*R. B.*, May).
Addington, Sarah, Three Times a Bridesmaid (*G. H.*, Dec.).
Akers, Arthur K., Tiger Tonic (*R. B.*, Aug.); Gas an' Matches (*R. B.*, Oct.); No Luck Lyin' to Ladies (*R. B.*, Jan.); Alexander's One-Man Band (*B. B.*, Feb.); Detecting! (*R. B.*, May).
Alexander, R. E., In Russian Waters (*Ad.*, Nov. 15).
Alexander, R. W., Voices (*C. T.*, Aug. 18).
Aley, Maxwell, The Beautiful Blue Danube (*D.*, Aug.).
Allen, Robert L., Steamboat, Steamboat (*Sea.*, Nov.); Fresh-water Lubbers (*Sea*, June).
Allen, Sally Elliott, The Feminist Bug (*House.*, Mch.).
Anderson, Frederick Irving, The Wedding Gift (*S.E.P.*, Sept. 28); Thumbs Down (*S. E. P.*, June 28).
Anderton, Seven, Floptown Pearl (*B. B.*, Sept.); The Girl from Evil Lane (*R. B.*, Oct.); One Gangster Quits (*R. B.*, May).
Andrews, Lillian E., Five Moon Pass (*M. H.*, Feb.).

Andrews, Robert D., Big Al Came Back (*P. T.*, Mch.).

Annixter, Paul, Submarine (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 14); The Speckled Spearmen (*L.*, Feb. 8); Balmy Day (*C. H.*, Mch.); Battle Royal (*L.*, May 17).

Aswell, James, Time of Loving (*C. H.*, Dec.).

Atlee, Benge, The Beast (*R.*, Aug.); The Green Eye (*Am. B.—V. C.*, Oct.).

Augusburg, Paul Deresco, Cafeteria Girl (*Col.*, Sept. 21); Star of Madagascar (*Col.*, Sept. 28); No Clothes to Speak of (*W. H. C.*, Nov.); The Saphead from Sausalito (*C. T.*, Dec. 15); When a Man Bites a Dog (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.); Batavia Bound (*Col.*, Apr. 19).

Avery, Stephen Morehouse, Evil Intent (*Col.*, Aug. 3); The New Bloom (*Col.*, Aug. 17); Leave It to the Ladies (*Col.*, Nov. 2); Sailcloth and Satin (*Col.*, Dec. 21); Anstruther Eyes (*McCall*, Feb.); Moonlight Bride (*Col.*, Feb. 8); The Burden of the Blonde (*Col.*, Feb. 22); Girl about Town (*Col.*, Apr. 5); Akin to Love (*Col.*, June 28).

Bailey, Temple, Early to Rise (*McCall*, Aug.); The Lighted Path (*McCall*, Dec.).

Banks, George L., The Stolen Jail (*R. M. M.*, Dec.).

Bankson, R. A., Gusher Gold (*S. S.*, Sept. 15).

Banning, Margaret Culkin, Beaux Arts (*L. H. J.*, Aug.); Prima Donna Stuff (*Am.*, Sept.); Immoral (*C. H.*, Sept.); Rent a Husband (*P. R.*, Feb.); Passenger List (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 8); Money Isn't Everything (*S. E. P.*, May 3); Company Manners (*S. E. P.*, May 10); The Four Best Years (*S. E. P.*, May 24).

Barker, S. Omar, Frenchy Turns South (*Cow.*, Mch. 30).

Barnes, Margaret Ayer, A Square Meal (*P. R.*, Mch.).

Barretto, Larry, Barrage (*Ad.*, Apr. 1).

Barry, Richard, All in a Night (*Brief S.*, Aug.).

Barth, Julian, Sequence (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 1).

Beach, Rex, Lava (*H. I. and C.*, Aug.).

Beatty, Jerome, Lucky Stiff (*C. G.*, Aug.); Take Your Time! (*Col.*, Aug. 31); Tommy Gets the Breaks (*Col.*, Nov. 16); "My! How Good They Are!" (*Col.*, Dec. 14); The Twenty-Fourth Hour (*Col.*, Jan. 4); One Bark for "Yes!" (*Col.*, Jan. 25); Finders Keepers (*Col.*, Feb. 8); Texas Good Girl (*Col.*, Mch. 29); True to Form (*Col.*, June 21).

Bechdolt, Frederick, Beyond the Llano (*B. B.*, Feb.); At Horsehead Crossing (*L.*, Feb. 15).

Bedford-Jones, H., Captain Rose and the Bullfrog (*Ad.*, Mch. 1); All Talk (*Ad.*, Mch. 15); Coastwise Murder (*Ad.*, Apr. 1); Jewels of Java (*S. S.*, Apr. 25); Loot of the Vesper (*S. S.*, June 25).

Beer, Thomas, No Horses, No Beggars (*S. E. P.*, June 7).

Bellah, James Warner, Mrs. Seton Buys a Necklace (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 14); Nice Girl (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 21); Mrs. Dwyer's Mistake (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 19).

Bennett, Charles Dana, Rose Astray (*Snappy Stories*, May).

Bennett, James W., By Appointment at the Glory Hole (*Ad.*, May 1).

Bentham, Josephine, The Loved Ones (*Hol.*, Oct.); Wail Your Jazz (*C. H.*, Jan.).

Bercovici, Konrad, Pure Silk (*D.*, Sept.); Leyla (*G. H.*, Oct.); Conquered (*D.*, Dec.).

Bierne, Francis F., The Things That Bill Forgot (*L.*, Jan. 25).

Binns, Archie, The Kiss of Peace (*Am. S. S.*, Jan.).

Bird, Will R., Bandages (*War*, Aug. 1); The Creeping Phantom (*War*, Mch. 27); The Neutral Club (*War*, Mch. 13).

Blakejohn, Henry, The Skyline Mystery (*R. D. T.*, Aug.).

Blackman, M. C., Middlemen (*P. T.*, Oct.).

Blochman, L. G., The Chota Sahib (*Ad.*, Mch. 1).

Booth, Charles G., Tarrbridge Balloons, Inc. (*Hol.*, May).

Borland, Hal, A Match for the Sheriff (*S. S.*, June 25).

Bower, B. M., The Rim Rider (*Ad.*, Nov. 1).

Boyd, Thomas, Jinx (*C. G.*, Nov.); The Mayor of Benbury (*W. H. C.*, Nov.); Extreme Mental Cruelty (*L. H. J.*, Mch.).

Boyle, Virginia Frazer, Ginger Cakes (*Elks*, Dec.).

Brackett, Charles, The Lioness and the Mouse (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 10); Accommodator (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 1).

Bradford, Roark, The Hog Hoisters (*Col.*, Apr. 5).

Brainard, Malcolm S., Towrope Navigators (*Sea*, Sept.).

Braley, Berton, Take a Taxi (*Elks*, Nov.).

Brand, Anna, It Pays to Advertise (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.).

Brandon, Marion, The Gift of the Dead (*C. W.*, Aug.).

Brennan, Frederick Hazlitt, College Hero (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 7); The Build-Up (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 14); That's Hollywood (*R. B.*, Jan.); Guido Signs a Bond (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 4); Navy Man (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 18); Gamblers (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.);

Cleopatra's Kid Sister (*L.*, Feb. 15); Making of a Sportswoman (*S. E. P.*, May 3); Why Don't You Answer Me? (*Col.*, June 14).

Bretherton, Vivien R., Fiancée for Rent (*L. H. J.*, Sept.); The Radiant Child (*Hol.*, Dec.); Fair Weather Friends (*G. H.*, Jan.); Romantic Samaritan (*D.*, Mch.); The Flirt Hat (*G. H.*, Mch.); Purple Grapes (*Smart Set*, May).

Briggs, John, Out on the Second Count (*S. S.*, Sept. 25).

Brockman, Clark, We White Men (*Ad.*, Jan. 15).

Bromley, Al, Bring Him in Dead (*R. D. T.*, Mch.).

Bronson, F. W., A Lily of the Fields (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 17).

Broun, Heywood, Speed Hammond's Soft Spot (*Col.*, Mch. 15).

Brown, Bernice, The First Beau (*L. H. J.*, Nov.); Spring Is Not Far Behind (*D.*, May); A Turn in Luck (*R. B.*, June).

Brown, Guthrie, The Bridge (*Ad.*, Apr. 1).

Brown, Royal,—but Never a Bridegroom (*H. I. and C.*, Aug.); A Punch for Judy (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.); Both Ends against the Middle (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); Romance without End (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.); Flowers for the Bride (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.); Sometime a Bridegroom at That (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.); You're Fired! (*H. I. and C.*, May).

Brown, Seaburn, Those White Hope Blues (*S. S.*, Jan. 25); Versus Kid Death (*S. S.*, Mch. 25); The Kidded Kid (*S. S.*, May 25).

Browne, Porter Emerson, and Smyth, Joseph Hilton, A Gamble in Futures (*Smart Set*, Oct.); Girls Demand Excitement (*Col.*, Mch. 1).

Brubaker, Howard, Boy-about-Town (*Am.*, Aug.); Rainbows (*C. G.*, Oct.).

Buckley, F. R., Samson (*Ad.*, Sept. 15); Spurning the Other Cheek (*S. S.*, Sept. 25); Of a Vanishment (*Ad.*, Mch. 1).

Burnet, Dana, Papa (*Col.*, Oct. 26).

Burt, Katharine Newlin, Mocker's Moon (*L. H. J.*, Aug.); Little Fellers (*L. H. J.*, May).

Burt, Struthers, Duello (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 8); Music at Ragusa (*S. E. P.*, May 3).

Burtis, Thomson, The Ghost Writer (*C. H.*, Aug.); Not on a Bet (*S. S.*, June 10).

Butler, Ellis Parker, Fenderton Roper, Realtor (*C. H.*, Aug.); Chips (*L.*, Oct. 5).

Caffrey, Andrew A., The Big Cheese (*Ad.*, Aug. 1).
Cahill, Laurence J., The Challenge (*T.*, Mch. 15).
Cameron, Anne, The Outlaw (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 5); Men at Work (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 12); Dangerous, But Passable (*S. E. P.*, May 10); F. O. B. (*S. E. P.*, June 14).
Campbell, Evelyn. The Strongest Tie (*McCall*, Aug.).
Campbell, New, The White Mule (*Sports and Hobbies*, Sept.).
Campbell, Reginald, Brave Man, Strong Man (*Ad.*, Aug. 1).
Caperton, Helena Lefroy, "The Honest Wine Merchant" (*B. S.*, Jan. 1.
Carhart, Arthur H., The Thinkin'est Dog (*R. B.*, Oct.).
Carhart, Arthur H., and Young, Stanley P., The Phantom Wolf (*B. B.*, Aug.).
Carleton, W. E., The Coast Guardsman (*B. B.*, Feb.).
Carleton, Warren Elliot, Lubber of the "Anne Hatch" (*Sea*, May); Cap Cole's Distress Signal (*T.*, May 1).
Carman, Dorothy Walworth, Four Is Too Many (*W. H. C.*, Sept.); Abigail Wants a Ring (*Am.*, Dec.).
Carr, George Ashley, Bungled in Butte (*T.*, Mch. 15).
Carrington, Elaine Sterne, Maitland's Wife (*P. R.*, June).
Carroll, Patrick J., Thunder (*C. W.*, Mch.).
Carse, Robert, Moon Magic (*R.*, Aug.); Chechacko (*S. S.*, Jan. 10); Outcasts (*S. S.*, Feb. 10).
Cary, Lucian, The Way to Put Them in Their Place (*C. H.*, Aug.); The Ride in the Country (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 22); George and the Perfect Lady (*Col.*, Mch. 29).
Casey, Rosemary, Brain Like Napoleon's (*C. H.*, Apr.).
Cassidy, Jane, Bitter Siege (*F.*, Aug.).
Catton, George L., The Supreme Law (*Am. S. S.*, Jan.).
Cave, Hugh B., The Pool of Death (*Brief S.*, Aug.); Captain Murder (*S. S.*, Jan. 25); A White Man Dies (*S. S.*, May 25).
Chalmers, Stephen, Dusty Delivers the Goods (*S. S.*, Nov. 25).
Chamberlain, George Agnew, Never Go Back (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 7).
Chambers, Canby, Stockings (*McCall*, Sept.).
Chambers, Robert W., Angelique (*McCall*, Nov.).
Chambers, Whitman, Navy Wives (*C. H.*, Dec.).
Chapman, Elisabeth Cobb, Sticks and Stones (*Hol.*, Jan.).
Chidsey, Donald Barr, He Lied Like a Gentleman (*R. B.*, May).
Childs, Marquis W., The Dark Silence (*Hol.*, Dec.).
Churchill, David, Cut Fences (*L. H. J.*, May).

Chute, Arthur Hunt, The Finger of Death (*B. B.*, Nov.).
Clark, Everett H., Featherhead (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 2).
Clark, Valma, The Loyalty of Mulroney (*Hol.*, Sept. 1).
Clarke, James, Knives at Night (*S. S.*, Nov. 10).
Clarke, Mabel McElliott, The Death of the Swan (*L.*, Nov. 30); Mr. and Mrs. Killjoy (*L.*, May 31).
Clune, Henry W., Sugar (*Mun.*, Sept.).
Coburn, Walter, Center-Fire Pride (*Ad.*, Sept. 1).
Coe, Charles Francis, The Well-Known Worm (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 7); The Way of a Man (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 9).
Cohen, Octavus Roy, The Permanent Waive (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 10); Marco Himself (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.); Cut and Dried (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 12); The End of the Circle (*L.*, Nov. 16); Sizzling Sadie (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 14); Picture Framed (*Elks*, Jan.); 5000 Feet Make One Smile (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 4); Jim Hanvey Intervenes (*Am.*, Feb.); Confidence (*McCall*, Apr.); Vanity's Fare (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 19); Nuts and Reasons (*S. E. P.*, May 24); Lemon Aid (*S. E. P.*, June 7), Bout Face (*S. E. P.*, June 28).
Colby, Natalie Sedgwick, Duo Da Capo (*Hol.*, Feb.).
Colladay, Winter, Old Man Jessup Is Going to Die (*F.*, Sept.).
Collins, Nancy, Golden Eyes (*Y.*, Aug.).
Condé, Lynn Boyd, Code of the Legion (*Ac.*, Jan.).
Condon, Frank, No More Widows! (*Col.*, Aug. 17); House Guests (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 21); All Square Again (*Col.*, May 10); Getting Off at Manila (*Col.*, May 17).
Conlon, Ben, The Perfect Crime (*Brief S.*, Aug.).
Connor, Glenn A., The Heart of Mustang Lewis (*S. S.*, Nov. 10); The Six-Shooter Kid (*S. S.*, Feb. 10); That Horse-Lovin' Hombre (*Cow.*, Apr.); Old Buzzard Head (*W.*, Apr. 16).
Conrad, Joe M., The Jungle Outpost (*War*, Jan.).
Cooper, Courtney Ryley, Leader of the Herd (*R. B.*, Feb.); Babes in the Wood (*R. B.*, Apr.); Each to His Own (*S. E. P.*, May 3).
Corcoran, William, A Pair of Shoes (*Ad.*, Jan. 1); The Return of Flash McGuire (*Ad.*, May 1).
Corning, Howard McKinley, The Cabin at Elk Prairie (*Fr.*, Jan.).
Cottrell, Dorothy, Before Bunny Came Here (*L. H. J.*, Aug.).
Cozzens, J. G., Future Assured (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 2); Some Day You'll Be Sorry (*S. E. P.*, June 21).
Cram, Mildred, Blue Marathon (*D.*, May).

Creel, George, The Pinch Hitter (*Col.*, Dec. 21); The Wrath of Kings (*Col.*, Mch. 15); Two Too Many (*Col.*, Apr. 19).
Crosby, Clive, An Even Break (*S. S.*, Nov. 25).
Crosby, Jane Snowden, She Came with Glamour (*Scr.*, Feb.).
Croy, Homer, It Happened in Paris (*Brief S.*, Sept.).
Crozier, Jo, The Impostor (*Hol.*, Aug.).
Curry, Tom, The Masterpiece (*R. D. T.*, Aug.); The Man from Headquarters (*B. M.*, Nov.).
Curtiss, Elizabeth Mangam, The Temple of Worship (*Hol.*, May).

Dalmas, Herbert, Big Things from Henry (*S. E. P.*, May 31).
Davies, Ona Almona, That Ditzler Boy (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 14); The Thin Edge of Truth (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 9); A Mile of Apple Trees (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 14).
Davis, Elmer, The Rich Have No Troubles (*Col.*, Sept. 7); Brains in Her Foot (*R. B.*, Feb.); Bachelor Girl (*R. B.*, Mch.).
Davis, H. L., Red Calico Meadows (*C. G.*, Apr.).
Davis, Howard Ellis, The Superman (*Ad.*, Dec. 1).
Day, Houston, Cat-Eyes (*Sea*, Sept.); Cleaned Up (*Sea*, Jan.); Round Heels (*L.*, May 24).
Dazey, Frank, Sky Life (*R.*, Oct.).
Dazey, Frank Mitchell, Gentleman's Game (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 29); That's Polo (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 19).
Dealey, Ted, Dog Gone! (*Hol.*, Nov.).
Dean, Graham, Corn-Belt Cardigan (*Brief S.*, Aug.).
De Bra, Lemuel L., The Best Little Racket (*B. B.*, Sept.); The Dedham Mansion Case (*B. B.*, Nov.).
Delano, Edith Barnard, The Perfidy of Woman (*Am.*, Sept.); Out of Court (*C. G.*, Sept.); A "Polisher" for Jinny (*Am.*, Jan.).
Dellinger, E. S., Torpedo (*Ad.*, Jan.).
Delmar, Viña, Honeymoon (*L.*, Dec. 7).
de Montalvo, Marie, Typographical (*L.*, Jan. 25).
Dennis, Enid, Love Came Back (*C. W.*, Oct.).
Dennis, Warren, Satisfying Kine (*C. H.*, Dec.).
De Polo, Harold, The Small Glass Eye (*D. F.*, Sept. 14); Inspector Frayne's New Topcoat (*D. F.*, Nov. 2).
Detzer, Karl W., Tony's Lulu (*Ad.*, Sept. 1); The Luck of the Rolling Jinx (*Ad.*, Dec. 1).
De Voto, Bernard, Sea Goddess (*R. B.*, Apr.).
Dexter, Byron, Young Hamlet (*Scr.*, Mch.).

Dickson, Harris, Bad Men and Worse Manners (*C. G.*, Oct.).
Donovan, Laurence, The Boom Bomber (*T.*, May 1).
Dorman, John, Little Cactus Flower (*Brief S.*, Sept.).
Dow, Dorothy, Beach Baby (*R. B.*, Aug.); A Million Pretty Girls (*R. B.*, Feb.).
Draper, E. S., The Voice of the Turtle (*Pr. S.*, Summer, 1929).
Draper, Edith Squier, Counted Out (*House.*, Dec.).
Drummond, David, "Get Goin'!" (*War*, Jan. 2); Sour Krauts (*War*, Feb. 13).
Ducas, Dorothy, Working Wives (*Smart Set*, May).
DuFresne, Frank, The Poisoner (*Ad.*, Mch. 1).
Duganne, Phyllis, One in a Lifetime (*R.*, Aug.); Oh, Dear Miss Fairfield (*D.*, Jan.); Lost on the Rue de la Something (*M. 1930*, Mch.); Some Day He'll Come Along (*R. B.*, Mch.); No Such Person (*R. B.*, May); Made in Paris (*Smart Set*, May).
Dunn, J. Allan, The Secret of the Shoals (*S. S.*, Sept. 15); On the Spot (*D. F.*, Sept. 21); The Frame-Up (*D. F.*, Sept. 28); Frozen Fur (*Sea*, Sept.); The Eye of Bunyip (*S. S.*, Dec. 25).
Dunn, Violette Kimball, A Marriage Bell (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 31).

Eberhardt, August, The Spirits of Sumdum (*Ad.*, Jan. 1).
Eden, Helen Parry, The Gilded Deputy (*C. W.*, Sept.).
Edgar, Day, The Minnesota Mangler (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 7).
Eliot, Captain George Fielding, Swords on the Somme (*War*, Feb. 13).
Eliott, M. L., Passage to Nanking (*Sea*, Mch.); Gorge of the Sorceress (*Sea*, May).
Ellerbe, Paul, Danger (*L.*, Nov. 23).
Ellerbe, Paul and Alma, Let's Eat (*R. B.*, May).
Emerson, Arthur T., Admiral Turkey (*Sea*, Mch.).
Emery, Steuart M., The Back-Line Hero (*War*, Apr. 24).
Erskine, John, Beanstalk (*H. I. and C.*, Aug.).
Erskine, Laurie York, Mandy Moves Up (*Col.*, Oct. 12); One Man Too Many (*Col.*, Nov. 2); You Can't Manage Men (*C. H.*, Jan.).
Evans, Ida M., The Wind Bloweth (*H. I. and C.*, Aug.); Orchids for Women (*L. H. J.*, Jan.); Dollar Babies (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).
Evans, Wainwright, Divorce to the Rescue (*P. R.*, June).

Evarts, Hal G., Tide Flats (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 14); Snowhide (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 12); Phantom of the Aspens (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 19).

Fellom, Jim, The Sublime Simp (*Ad.*, Aug. 1).
Fellows, John, Fighting Gloves (*T.*, Jan. 15).
Field, Wright, Her Man's Woman (*C. W.*, Oct.).
Firanze, Harold C., The Mortal Measure (*D. F.*, Sept. 21).
Fischer, Maurice, A Penny Box of Matches (*R. D. T.*, May).
Fitzgerald, Edith, If You Ask Me (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 2); The Georgians (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 4); Lights (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 15).
Fitzgerald, F. Scott, At Your Age (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 17); Two Wrongs (*S. E. P.*, Jan 18); A Millionaire's Girl (*S. E. P.*, May 17); A Nice Quiet Place (*S. E. P.*, May 31).
Fitzgerald, F. Scott, and Zelda, Southern Girl (*C. H.*, Oct.); The Girl with Talent (*C. H.*, Apr.).
Flynn, T. T., Battle Across the Islands (*S. S.*, Aug. 10); Revolution on Rails (*S. S.*, Dec. 10); The Magnificent Gamble (*C. T.*, June 15).
Foland, John, Original Lies (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 2).
Folsom, Elizabeth Irons, Half Gods (*R.*, Sept.); Hort Laughed Out Loud (*T.*, 1st June No.).
Footner, Hulbert, Man Overboard! (*C. T.*, Sept.).
Ford, Sewell, A Hop with Cyril (*L. H. J.*, May).
Ford, T. W., Son of a Killer (*Ac.*, Jan.).
Foree, Kenneth, Jr., Closed Market (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 9); Take Up (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 15).
Fort, William, Dead Man's Road (*Ad.*, Feb. 1).
Francis, Leslie, The Belle of Tocopilla (*Sea*, Mch.).
Francis, Owen, Disaster (*P. T.*, June).
Franklin, George Cory, The Hamstringer (*Cow.*, Oct.); Tough to Take (*Cow*, Jan.); The Ridin' Kid (*Cow.*, Mch.); Short-Handed (*Cow.*, May).
Fraser, Ferrin L., You Can't Convict a Pretty Woman (*Col.*, Sept. 21); Skyscraper (*Col.*, Apr. 5); Manhattan Murder (*R. D. T.*, May); Twelve Men in a Box (*R. D. T.*, June).
Freesland, Wilson S., Hidden Thunder (*War*, Mch.).
Fry, Captain H. G., Dregs of the Regiment (*War*, Mch.).

Gale, Zona, Mallard's Vacation (*Am.*, May).
Gallagher, Anthony F., The Million Dollar Barrage (*War*, Jan. 2).

Gardner, George, Promotion (*Sea*, Nov.).
Gatlin, Dana, Sleeping Beauty (*R.*, Nov.); The House That Died (*L.*, Nov. 9); The Road Called You (*H. B.*, Mch.).
Gay, Ann, Half a Heart (*Y.*, Jan).
Gelders, Jesse, F., Say It With Music (*McCall*, Sept.).
Gelzer, Jay, Red-Hot Blues (*Col.*, Feb. 8); Familiar Miracle (*L. H. J.*, Apr.).
Gill, Tom, Big Boy (*Col.*, June 21); In the Mexican Quarter (*H. I. and C.*, June).
Gilpatric, Guy, Hidden Hands (*L.*, Apr. 5).
Givens, Colonel, Tiny (*L.*, Jan. 18).
Glass, Montague, He Always Wrote Her Everything (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.).
Goldman, Raymond Leslie, The Pairing of the Queen (*Elks*, Mch.).
Goodwyn, Mona March, Woman in Yellow (*H. B.*, Aug.).
Gordon, Edythe Mae, Hostess (*S. E. Q.*, Annual, June, 1930).
Graeve, Oscar, Christmas Eve at Red Moon (*Am.*, Dec.).
Green, Lawrence. In the Fog (*Sea*, Nov.); Off Ascension (*Sea*, June).
Green, Walton, Black Wednesday (*S. E. P.*, May 3).
Greene, L. Patrick, The Major Sets a Trap (*S. S.*, Aug. 10).
Gunther, John, Passion in Poland (*F.*, Sept.).
Gurnee, Odgers T., The King Decides (*Col.*, May 17).
Gwynne, Bertha Lowry, Tea for Lovers (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 8).

Hadley, Irene, A Note for the Theme (*M. H. L.*, Feb.).
Hale, Agnes Burke, The Call of the Wild Rose (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 29).
Hall, Leonard, Episode in an Artist's Life (*Am. Merc.*, Sept.).
Hallet, Richard Matthews, Walk in the Water (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 17); Railroad Speed (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 12); The Soul Killer (*S. E. P.*, May 3).
Hamill, Stuart, Oskar of the Engineers (*War*, Mch. 13).
Hamilton, H. M., The Events of the Evening (*Breezy Stories*, Nov.).
Hamilton, R. E., Forgets Easy (*Ad.*, Nov. 1); The Devil's Company (*Ad.*, Dec. 1).
Hanlon, Brooke, Daisy's Day (*McCall*, Feb.); East, West—(*S. E. P.*, Mch. 1); Bright Like a Canary (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 26); Marriage Goes on Forever (*W. H. C.*, May); Bachelors of Arts (*S. E. P.*, May 24); Baby Girl Parmalee (*C. T.*, June 8).

Harmon, Beatrice, The Daughter of Charley Malone (*L.*, Nov. 2).
Hartis, Foster, Hell Quenchers (*Ad.*, Nov. 15); The Tough Cooky (*S. S.*, Mch. 10).
Harris, Kennett, An Evening at Leon's (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 14); No Time for Girls (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 25); The Wise Woman's Charm (*Elks*, Feb.).
Hart, Louis Folwell, In the Dark of the Moon (*R. D. T.*, Aug.).
Hartley, Roland, English, Revolt in Summertime (*Fr.*, May).
Hartwick, Harry, Happiness up the River (*Fr.*, Nov.).
Hatch, Alden, Tailspin (*W. H. C.*, Oct.); Landings (*W. H. C.*, May).
Havermale, Hazel, Li'l Ginger (*D.*, Aug.).
Hawthorne, Ruth, To Mantauk and Back (*Hol.*, Aug.).
Haycox, Ernest, By Rope and Lead (*S. S.*, Aug. 10); Powder Smoke (*S. S.*, Sept. 15); Contention Two Miles Ahead (*S. S.*, Sept. 25).
Hazard, Robert, Old Bill (*Scr.* Mch.).
Held, John, Jr., Autumn Landscape (*H. I. and C.*, May); MacDunald (*H. I. and C.*, June).
Hellman, Sam, "Them Days Are Sunk Forever" (*R. B.*, Aug.); So's Your Zodiac (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 31); Hit and Run (*R. B.*, Oct.); Do and Diet (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 7).
Hendryx, James B., Actions Speak Louder Than Words (*Ad.*, Sept. 15).
Henney, Keith, Calumet Copper (*Sea*, June).
Henson, Elsie Grant, The Star in the Window (*C. W.*, Dec.).
Herbst, Josephine, The Golden Egg (*Scr.*, May).
Hergesheimer, Joseph, Love in the United States (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 7); The Limestone Tree—Les Kaintocks (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 23); The Limestone Tree—Dark Memory (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 18); The Limestone Tree—The Purse Race (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 22); The Limestone Tree—The Rebel Trace (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 26); The Limestone Tree—The Stainless Heart (*S. E. P.*, June 28).
Herrick, Genevieve Forbes, About the Length of Skirts (*Am.*, Apr.).
Hess, Leonard, Dark Forests (*McCall*, Feb.).
Hill, Drew, Fifty Yards Away (*War*, Dec. 19).
Hill, Howard Rice, Forest Gold (*T.*, Mch. 30).
Hillman, Gordon, Little Arizona (*Brief S.*, Sept.).
Hilton, Francis W., The Pinto Whittledig (*Cow.*, Mch.); The

Hoodoo Calf (*Cow.*, Apr.); The Double Cross (*Cow.*, June).

Hohoff, Tay, Aftermath (*W. H. C.*, Nov.).

Holt, George E., The Guidance of Guile (*Ad.*, Sept. 1); Al-Lateef Is Al-Lateef (*Ad.*, Jan. 1).

Hope, Edward, Detective by Request (*H. I. and C.*, Aug.); The Shades of Night (*L.*, Mch. 1).

Hopkins, Tom J., Man with the Steel Hook (*Ac.*, Dec.); Riding the Death Trail (*Ac.*, Mch.); The Death Journey (*Ac.*, June).

Horn, Roy deS., Ash Cans for Bristol Bill (*Ad.*, Dec. 1).

Horne, John, The Speared Leopard (*W. T.*, Aug.).

Hoys, Dudley, Goats Have Beards (*D. F.*, Sept. 14); Tropic Madness (*T.*, 2nd Oct. No.).

Hoyt, Palmer, She-Devil (*Cow.*, Dec.).

Huddleston, Blanche, The Serious Career (*House.*, May).

Hughes, Elizabeth Burgess, Sirocco! (*M. 1930*, Mch.).

Huie, Robert Otis, The Swinging Chariot (*The Home Friend Magazine*, Jan.).

Huse, Harry G., Overtrained (*Ad.*, Feb. 1).

Hynd, Alan, Presby Takes a Chance (*Brief S.*, Sept.).

Irwin, Inez Haynes, The Perpetual Substitute (*Am.*, Oct.).

Irwin, Wallace, Lemon Verbena (*W. H. C.*, Aug.); Do As You're Told (*W. H. C.*, Sept.); Midair (*C. T.*, Sept. 8); The Lost Lover (*L.*, Nov. 30); The Heavenly Cop (*L. H. J.*, Jan.); Go Get 'Er! (*W. H. C.*, Apr.); The Man Who Would Be Brave (*P. R.*, June).

Jackson, Charles Tenney, The Frame Up (*S. S.*, Sept. 25); Doubles or Quits (*S. S.*, Nov. 25); Hicks from the Sticks (*S. S.*, Mch. 25); The Return of Riley (*S. S.*, Apr. 10).

Jackson, Margaret Weymouth, Love Comes but Once (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 28); Prince on Horseback (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 1); Pollywog (*L. H. J.*, Mch.); Model Discontinued (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 15); Holiday (*McCall*, Apr.); Without Recourse (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 19).

James, Will, On the Dodge (*R. B.*, Jan.).

Jenks, Almet, The Tin Box (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 8); Night Bloom (*S. E. P.*, May 10).

Jensen, Herbert, The Very Wise Virgin (*Y.*, Jan.).

Johns, Robert Emmet, Breed of the Mounted (*S. S.*, Feb. 10).

Johnson, Nunnally, Away from It All (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 15); The Shocking Case of Gregory Elwood (*Am.*, Apr.); Those Old Pals of Hers (*S. E. P.*, May 3).
Johnston, J. R., The Law of the Forty-Five (*Cow.*, May).
Johnston, Mary, The End of the World (*L. H. J.*, Mch.).
Jones, John Paul, Rope for a Gambler (*Ac.*, Nov.).
Jones, Stanley, The Last Fare (*Elks*, Apr.).
Jones, Vara Macbeth, The Black Urge (*C. T.*, Feb. 9).
Jordan, Elizabeth, Christmas Gift (*C. T.*, Dec. 22); Strong's Inhibition (*C. T.*, Mch. 2).
Jorgensen, Nels Leroy, Fragrance of Roses (*R.*, Sept.).

Kahler, Hugh MacNair, Alibi (*Col.*, Aug. 24); Judgment-Proof (*C. G.*, Oct.); Meddling Through (*Col.*, Nov. 2); No Romance (*Col.*, Dec. 7).
Kantor, McKinlay, A Check from the Deceased (*R. D. T.*, Apr.); Death in the Evening (*R. D. T.*, May).
Karney, Kil, An Office Sketch (*H. Merc.*, Aug.).
Kay, Nell, Running Rings (*Brief S.*, Sept.).
Keena, Jessie Ford, In the Bag (*Col.*, May 24).
Kelland, Clarence Budington, Phenomena, and So Forth (*L. H. J.*, Aug.); The Impossible (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 3); Weak Links (*S. E. P.*, Aug 24); The Young Man Who Was Prepared for Everything (*Am.*, Oct.); The Hat and the Rabbit (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 14).; The Man Who Avoided People (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 11); Between Two Facts (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 25); For Burnt Fingers (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 8); A Matter of Nerve (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 22); Alderman Tommy Drops In (*Col.*, Mch. 15); Not So Humdrum (*W. H. C.*, May); One Step Out (*S. E. P.*, May 31); Honeymoon (*S. E. P.*, June 7); Ramikin Rubies (*S. E. P.*, June 14); Cheese For the Trap (*S. E. P.*, June 21); The Sands Run Swiftly (*S. E. P.*, June 28).
Kempton, Kenneth Payson, Lost—$5,000,000 (*Y. C.*, Sept.).
Kennedy, John B., The Last Leader (*Col.*, Aug. 3); The Right Dope (*Col.*, Sept. 7); Mr. Remsen's Racket (*Col.*, Dec. 7); The Money Machine (*Col.*, Jan. 25); Isis Was a Queen (*Col.*, May 3); Grudge Fight (*Col.*, May 17).
Kerr, Sophie, Soft Stuff (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 7); Onions, Fr. Fr. (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 28); Truth (*W. H. C.*, Sept.); Courage (*W. H. C.*, Dec.); Edward Has a Remarkable Wife (*C. G.*, Jan.);

Double Play (*S.E.P.*, Mch. 8); Loyalty (*W.H.C.*, Mch.).

Kilbourne, Fannie, The Pace That Bores (*Am.*, Aug.); Who Hates to Let the Seaman Roam (*D.*, Nov.); A Month at Miami (*L. H. J.*, Jan.); The Fork of the Road (*L. H. J.*, Mch.).

King, Frank, The Fluke (*D. F.*, Sept. 21).

Kirk, R. G., On the Square (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 14); Dead Game (*Col.*, June 7).

Kirkham, Stanton D., The Eternal Feminine (*Strat.*, Feb.).

Klahr, Evelyn Gill, The King Is Dead, Long Live the King (*G. H.*, Aug.); The Hamilton Terry (*W. H. C.*, Apr.).

Knapp, Martin, Roderigo Don's Son (*C. G.*, Feb.).

Knibbs, Henry Herbert, Dog Eat Dog (*S. S.*, June 10).

Kniffin, Harry Anable, Dark Deeds Aboard (*Brief S.*, Sept.).

Knight, Gladys, Heah Dem Blues (*Hol.*, Mch.).

Kummer, Frederic Arnold, The Feminine Touch (*L.*, May 3).

Kutner, Nanette, Strong Man (*Brief S.*, Aug.); Green Orchids (*G. H.*, Sept.).

Kyne, Peter B., A Film-Star's Holiday (*H. I. and C.*, Aug.); Firing Squad (*Col.*, Sept. 7); Let Freedom Ring (*Col.*, Oct. 12); O'Bannion Rules the Roost (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.); A 10-Minute Egg (*H. I. and C.*, June).

La Mar, Bud, The Bear That Busted (*B. B.*, Nov.).

Lamb, Harold, Protection (*Col.*, Aug. 24).

La Mountain, Marion, Tropic Moon (*Y.*, Apr.).

Lane, Lois, The Purple Sedan (*W. T.*, Aug.).

Lane, Rose Wilder, Village Maiden (*R. B.*, May).

Lathrop, Don, The Pot of Gold (*Cow.*, Jan.).

Lathrop, Gilbert A., The Galloping Goose (*War*, Jan. 30); Mick's Gandy Dancers (*War*, Mch. 13); Hair on the Chest (*War*, Mch. 27).

Lathrop, Harley P., A Battleship for Kate (*S. S.*, Dec. 10).

Leach, Paul R., Going on Twelve (*R. B.*, Jan.).

Lebar, John, Bright Girl (*H. I. and C.*, June).

Lee, Jeannette, Joseph and His Millions (*P. R.*, May).

Leech, Margaret, Ladylike (*W. H. C.*, Aug.).

Leinster, Murray, The Murderer (*W. T.*, Jan.); The Eye of Black Awang (*S. S.*, Jan. 10); The Emerald Buddha (*S. S.*, Feb. 10).

LeMay, Alan, A Shot in the Dark (*Col.*, Dec. 14); Just a Horse of Mine (*Col.*, Feb. 22); Under Fire (*Col.*, Mch. 8); Old

Thunder Pumper (*Col.*, Mch. 22); The Battle of Gunsmoke Lode (*Col.*, Apr. 26).
Lengel, William C., Another Child Is Born (*Am. S. S.*, Mch.).
Leonard, Edward, Sealed Lips (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 2).
Leslie, Hal, Lead Justice (*Ac.*, Jan.).
Levin, Meyer, Reb Feivel Read the Holy Books (*Men.*, Feb.).
Levy, Melvin P., Natey Pansey (*Men.*, Jan.).
Lewis, Col. George Warburton, Carnation Street (*Brief S.*, Aug.).
Lewis, Sinclair, Dear Editor (*H. I. and C.*, Aug.); What a Man! (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.).
Lincoln, Freeman, Fog (*G. H.*, Nov.); Eggs and Chips (*G. H.*, Feb.).
Lincoln, Joseph C., The Cog That Slipped (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 10).
Lister, Queene B., The Dun Horse (*Fr.*, Nov.).
Littell, Edmund M., Kid Brother (*Elks*, Feb.); Steel Bent (*Ad.*, Apr. 1).
Long, E. Waldo, Watch Me Get Fired! (*Am.*, Aug.); Father Kicks Over the Traces (*P. R.*, May).
Lowell, Joan, Devils! (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.).
Lyman, Dean S., Jr., On the Sands (*Mor.*, Autumn No., 1929).
Lyndon, Barry, The Four Dud Shells (*Ad.*, Jan. 1).

McCarthy, J. Barry, Dark Legend (*Sea.*, Mch.).
McCoy, Horace, The Little Black Book (*B. M.*, Jan.).
McEvoy, J. P., Mother's Boy (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.); Square As a Die (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.); Lonely Heart (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.).
McFadden, Frances, Gay Paree (*P. R.*, Sept.).
McGuire, Harry, At New Haven (*C. H.*, May).
McIntyre, John T., The Three Wise Men (*Am. S. S.*, Mch.).
McKenna, Edward L., Patchouli (*L.*, Mch. 8); The Facts about Avis (*R. B.*, June).
McLaughlin, Fred, The Plumed Knight (*Ac.*, Mch.).
McLellan, Howard, Wired (*L.*, Aug. 3); The Moll-Trap (*Col.*, Nov. 30).
McMorrow, Thomas, Diamonds (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 14); Pearls (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 12); Racketeer (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 2); A Matter of Principle (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 4); Peter Rook, Honest Bucketeer (*S. E. P.*, May 3).
McNary, Herbert L., The Money Player (*B. B.*, Sept.).
McNicol, L. B., "Killed in Action" (*War*, Apr. 24).
McVicker, Daphne Alloway, Sally, How Could You? (*C. H.*, Jan.).

Mabie, Louise Kennedy, The Tinsel Fish (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 14); Dance with Me (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 12); The Primrose Plant (*S. E. P.*, June 21).

MacAlarney, Robert Emmet, Goddess in the Car (*Am.*, Apr.).

MacDowell, Syl, Hors de Dingbat (*War*, Aug. 29).

MacIsaac, Fred, Ice-Cold Kisses (*Col.*, Sept. 21); Glorifying Miss Browne (*L.*, Dec. 14); Druid's Eyes (*Col.*, Feb. 1).

Maginnis, Amy Brooks, Every Dog (*C. W.*, Oct.).

Mahoney, James, Poor Little Bessie May (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 14).

Marks, Percy, Nancy Disposes (*C. T.*, May 18).

Marmur, Jacland, Sentinels of the Sea (*S. S.*, Jan. 25).

Marquand, John P., Leave Her, Johnny—Leave Her (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 15).

Marquis, Don, An Ancient Mariner (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 28); The Meeting (*H.*, Oct.).

Marquiss, Walter, The Demonstrator (*Smart Set*, Oct.).

Marston, C. C., Unanswered (*Y.*, Jan.).

Martin, Neil, Pearl Madness (*Sea*, Sept.); The Golden Skulls (*Sea*, Mch.).

Martin, W. Thornton, Scrapbook (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 30); English 47 (*C. H.*, Jan.); The College Widow (*C. H.*, May).

Martini, R., The Iron Cross (*War*, Mch. 30).

Martyr, Weston, A Contact with Reality (*Ad.*, Aug. 1).

Mauck, Hilda, The Right Man (*R. B.*, Aug.); Playing with Fire (*R. B.*, Jan.).

Maxwell, Georgia, The Parrot That Talked in Its Sleep (*Smart Set*, Jan.).

Maynard, Lawrance M., Accelerated Justice (*D. F.*, Nov. 2); School Days (*Am. Merc.*, Mch.).

Means, E. K., The Great Farm School (*Mun.*, Sept.).

Mercein, Eleanor, El U el Dos (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 26); Feria (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 22).

Merwin, Samuel, Curtain's Up (*McCall*, Jan.).

Miller, Alice Duer, The Rummage Sale (*W. H. C.*, Dec.); Corinna Annoys a Marquis (*W. H. C.*, Jan.); Queen High (*W. H. C.*, Mch.); Corinna Goes Home (*W. H. C.*, Apr.); Monarch of All He Served (*Am.*, June).

Miller, Helen Topping, Lover, Come Back (*McCall*, Dec.); Broomtails (*McCall*, Apr.).

Miller, Warren H., The Desperation of Mr. Dee (*B. B.*, Aug.); The Color-Guard (*B. B.*, Sept.); Position (*Sea*, Sept.);

Shore Leave (*Am. B.-Y. C.*, Oct.); It Takes the Legion (*B. B.*, Nov.).

Mills, Joe, A Bundle of Fur (*B. B.*, Sept.).

Milton, Paul R., The Last Bullet (*Brief S.*, Aug.); The Picador (*Brief S.*, Sept.).

Mintzer, Murney, The Victory Ship (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 26).

Mitchell, John, Law Don't Matter (*P. T.*, June).

Mitchell, Ruth Comfort, This Is New! (*W. H. C.*, Dec.).

Mongan, P. M., The "Nanshan's" Skipper (*Sea*, May).

Montanye, C. S., Glitter (*Breezy Stories*, Nov.).

Montross, Lois Seyster, Tumbler's Act (*L. H. J.*, Apr.).

Montross, Lynn, "Nothing Is Ever All Over with You" (*Am.*, Aug.); Sobbie (*Col.*, June 7).

Montross, Lynn and Lois, Brothers Under the Skin (*C. H.*, Oct.).

Moore, David William, On Top of the World (*Am. B.-Y. C.*, Oct.).

Moore, Olga, Practically Faithful (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 26).

Moore, Samuel Taylor, Two Marines Have Landed (*War*, Jan.).

Moravsky, Maria, She Loosened Her Hair (*Brief S.*, Sept.).

Morgan, Bassett, Sea God (*Sea*, Nov.); The Sea Decides (*R.*, Jan.).

Morris, Gouverneur, Iphigenia in Tua Nua (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 26); Tea Tua Nua (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.).

Moses, Kingsley, Caissons Front! (*B. B.*, Sept.).

Mulford, Clarence E., Hopalong Sits In (*S. S.*, Jan. 10).

Munro, Meeda, Crème de la Crème (*Hol.*, Aug.).

Munsterberg, Margaret, Heat (*Strat.*, May).

Munyan, Arthur T., Rag Doll (*L.*, Oct. 26); So Debonair (*C. H.*, Feb.); Sandra (*C. H.*, Dec.); Heartsick Town (*McCall*, Mch.); The Magic Fire (*L. H. J.*, Apr.).

Mygatt, Gerald, Ambition Is a Woman (*McCall*, Sept.); A Seat in the Subway (*Am.*, Dec.); Nice Girls Don't (*P. R.*, May); Steel's the Stuff (*Col.*, May 3).

Nason, Leonard H., A Platoon Missing (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 24); The General's Horse (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 14); Aux Allies Glorieux (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 12); The Lamplighter (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 26); Ixtas Gain (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 7); A Man with Judgment (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 25); The Car without a Country (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 22); Spur Track (*S. E. P.*, May 10).

Nebel, Frederick L., The Makings of Command (*Elks*, Oct.); Out of Stir (*V.*, Nov.).

Neidig, William J., St. Louis and the Lamb (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 21);

Diamonds for Ladies (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 7); Beating the Lights (*Col.*, Mch. 29); Alibi (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 12).
Neville, Margot, The Infallible Sex (*W. H. C.*, Sept.).
New, Clarence Herbert, Free Lances in Diplomacy (*B. B.*, Sept.).
Newcomb, Kay, Home-Wreckers (*Y.*, Jan.).
Newsom, J. D., When the Dead Arise (*S. S.*, Jan. 10).
Nichols, Robert H. H., The Goldbrickers (*Sea*, Nov.).
Nicholson, Meredith, Come to Kernville (*H. I. and C.*, June).
Norris, John, Hot Heels (*Hol.*, Dec.).
Norris, Kathleen, High Holiday (*D.*, Apr.).
Novak, Sonia Ruthèle, Tulip-Tree Honey (*G. H.*, Aug.).

O'Flaherty, D. C., Flying Daggers (*War*, Aug. 29).
Oliver, Jennie Harris, Flowers of Judgment (*Hol.*, Oct.).
Olsen, James P., Man Hunter (*Ac.*, Feb.); The Buzzard Brand (*Ac.*, May).
Oppenheim, Ralph, Mosquito Luck (*War*, Feb. 13).
Outerson, Captain William, Castaway (*B. B.*, Sept.).
Overlees, Miriam Scott, Calendulas (*Y.*, Jan.).
Overton, Clara Wallace, Big Red Ribbon Round the World (*D.*, Jan.).

Palmer, Stuart, The Mystery Launch (*Brief S.*, Aug.); A Hunk of Gold (*Brief S.*, Sept.).
Panton, McBride, Whistling Wind (*Hol.*, June).
Paradise, Viola, The Dinner Party (*W. H. C.*, May).
Parker, Austin, Free (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.); A Matter of Course (*L.*, Oct. 19); Love Story (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 23).
Partridge, Pauline, The Child (*P. R.*, Oct.); It Always Works (*W. H. C.*, Mch.).
Pascal, Ernest, The Devil's Journey (*C. W.*, Sept.).
Patterson, Alicia, Joy Ride (*L.*, May 24).
Paul, L., Friendly River (*S. S.*, May 25).
Payne, Stephen, Broncs for the Bar 9 (*Cow.*, Oct.); The Clean Herd (*Cow.*, Dec.); Death Canyon (*Cow.*, Jan.); Empty Saddles (*Cow.*, Mch.); Expert Range Detectives (*Cow.*, May); The Hell-Hound's Round-Up (*Cow.*, June).
Payson, Edward, Flashing Oars (*T.*, May 1).
Peabody, Burton W., Carnival (*R., Sept.*).
Peery, Robert, The Palace of the Dead (*W. T.*, Oct.); The Renegade Major (*War*, Jan. 30).

Pelley, William Dudley, The Woman Who Waited (*R. B.*, Jan.).
Pendexter, Hugh, The Magnolia Showdown (*S. S.*, Sept. 25).
Perry, Peter, The Yellow Slicker (*R. D. T.*, Dec-Jan.); Forget-Me-Not (*R. D. T.*, Mch.).
Perry, Ralph R., A Curse Passes (*Ad.*, Aug. 1); The Main Chance (*Ad.*, Apr. 1).
Peterson, Martin S., Smoland (*Fr.*, May).
Phelps, John Dudley, Gift of Courage (*Ac.*, Jan.).
Phillips, Ernie, Hardboiled (*S. S.*, Mch. 25).
Phillips, Henry Wallace, The Demon in the Canyon (*B. M.*, Nov.).
Phillips, Roland, To Be Delivered (*Ad.*, Aug. 1).
Piazzi, Frank, The Fall Guy (*T.*, Jan. 1).
Pickering, James Sayre, What More Could He Do? (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 1).
Pickett, Capt. C., "Adios—Philippines!" (*War*, Aug. 29).
Pitney, A. deFord, Hotel Woman (*R. B.*, Apr.).
Pladwell, E. S., Carmelita (*Ad.*, Aug. 1); The Honest Mackenzie (*S. S.*, May 25).
Poindexter, William E., Sergeant Heinie (*War*, Mch.).
Poole, Ernest, The Man Who Climbed Above the War (*H. B.*, Aug.); Any Night Is Holy Night When a Child Is Born (*Am.*, Jan.); The Woman Who Used Her Head (*Am.*, Apr.); The Mother Who Stepped Aside (*L.*, June 28).
Porter, Raymond, W., The Wood of Missing Men (*War*, Apr.).
Post, Melville Davisson, The Guilty Man (*Am.*, Sept.).
Powell, Dawn, Regatta (*C. H.*, Sept.); Gentleman Bewitched (*C. H.*, Mch.).
Pratt, H. R., El Niño Dios (*Sea*, Jan.).
Preston, Dick, Deadly Female (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 2).
Price, Frances, Going to Hell (*Y.*, Apr.).
Proctor, A. A., Quitting Time (*Col.*, Sept. 21).
Putnam, Nina Wilcox, I Knew Him When—(*S. E. P.*, Nov. 9); Theme Song (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 25).

Raddall, Thomas H., Pounding Brass (*Sea*, Aug.); The Little Red Gods (*Sea*, Mch.).
Raine, Norman Reilly, The Wind (*R.*, Oct.); The Dandy Man (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 15).
Reck, Franklin M., Interference (*Am. B.-Y. C.*, Oct.).
Redman, Ben Ray, The Enduring Image (*Scr.*, Sept.).
Reynard, Lester, He's Give the Works (*B. M.*, Sept.).

Reynolds, John Murray, Garbanzos (*Sea*, Sept.).
Rice, Louise, The Romany Way (*Brief S.*, Aug.).
Richardson, Norval, A Whiff of Romance (*W. H. C.*, Sept.).
Richart, Mary, On the Road to Kandy (*L.*, Jan. 4).
Riche, Henry, Explosions (*Sea*, Sept.).
Ridley, Florida Ruffin, Two Pairs of Gloves (*S. E. Q.*, Annual, June, 1930).
Rober, Eric, The Mutiny of the Monk (*Ac.*, Sept.); The Monk Makes War (*Ac.*, Nov.); Marooning of the Monk (*Ac.*, Dec.); The Monk Amuck (*Ac.*, Feb.); The Monk to the Rescue (*Ac.*, May).
Roberts, Willa, Living Dog, Dead Lion (*W. H. C.*, Sept.); Picnic On Sandy Hill (*W. H. C.*, May).
Robertson, Frank C., The Box-Car Barnacle (*S. S.*, Feb. 10).
Robertson, Stewart, Camera Eye (*Col.*, June 21).
Robinson, Lee, Paid to Die (*Ac.*, Feb.); Blood and Gold (*S. S.*, May 25).
Roche, Arthur Somers, He's My Man (*Col.*, Aug. 3); The Making of a Gentleman (*Col.*, Sept. 14); Renunciation (*Col.*, Mch. 1); Men Are That Way (*Col.*, Apr. 12); Sacrifice (*Col.*, May 10).
Roe, Vingie E., The Long Road (*McCall*, Feb.).
Rogers, Bogart, Olympic Material (*C. T.*, Aug. 25).
Rohde, Robert H., Shadow of the Rope (*D. F.*, Sept. 28).
Roscoe, Theodore, The Curse Kiss (*W. T.*, Feb.); Killer of Khandigoul (*Ac.*, May).
Rosenberg, George, The Feud-Buster of Palo Pinto (*Cow.*, Apr.).
Rouse, William Merriam, For Some Pelts (*S. S.*, Jan. 25).
Runyon, Damon, A Very Honorable Guy (*H. I. and C.*, Aug.); Lillian (*Col.*, Feb. 1).
Ryan, Stella, Birthday (*P. R.*, Apr.).

Sabastian, Inez, Such a Good Sport (*Am.*, Dec.).
St. Johns, Adela Rogers, The Romance of a Great Man (*Col.*, Feb. 1); The Prince Consort (*L.*, Apr. 12).
Salt, Syd S., Daisies (*New World's Monthly*, Jan.).
Sanborn, Ruth Burr, Jantie Wants a Plumber (*Col.*, Aug. 31); What Is Your Apex? (*L. H. J.*, Sept.); It's Swell to Be Crazy (*Col.*, Feb.); No Sense of Humor (*W. H. C.*, Mch.); Curves Are Fashionable (*Col.*, May 24); His Endurance Test (*Am.*, June).

Sangster, Margaret E., Four Ride through the Rain (*G. H.*, Sept.); Song of the Road (*G. H.*, Dec.).
Santini, Vera, Three's a Crowd (*Col.*, Mch. 8).
Saunders, Lawrence, Hell Gate to Paradise (*Col.*, Jan. 11); The Payoff (*L.*, Feb. 1); Soft Shoulders (*L.*, June 14).
Schalk, Gertrude, Saviour (*S. E. Q.*, Annual, June, 1930); Flower of the South (*Ibid.*)
Schindler, Frank J., You Betcha (*Ad.*, Sept. 15); Unconscious (*Ad.*, Jan. 15).
Schnetzler, Stanley S., Merry Christmas, Ha! Ha! (*Sea*, Jan.).
Scobee, Barry, Satan's Ears (*S. S.*, Aug. 25); The Wildcat Sheriff (*S. S.*, Sept. 25); State's Evidence (*S. S.*, Mch. 25); A Horse on 'Em (*S. S.*, Apr. 25).
Scruggs, Philip, The Double Jump (*T.*, Mch. 15).
Seelig, Rayner, One Fine Day (*L.*, Feb. 15); Impromptu (*McCall*, June).
Seewerker, Joe, "Ain't It the Truth!" (*War*, Jan. 2).
Seifert, Shirley, To Be a Lady (*C. T.*, Oct. 13); Marcella Keeps a Date (*L.*, Oct. 19); Coffee and a Cinnamon Bun (*Hol.*, Dec.); Forty Dollars to Spend (*McCall*, Jan.).
Shaw, Frank H., Qualities of Command (*Sea*, Aug.); The Last Windjammer (*Mun.*, Sept.); Penance (*Sea*, Mch.).
Sherwood, Elizabeth, The Path of Glory (*Am. S. S.*, Mch.).
Shumate, Harold (as related to), Portraits of Three Women—By a Man (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 8).
Shumway, Harry I., Nothing but the Truth (*Y. C.*, Aug.).
Shurtleff, Bertrand L., The Stowaway (*Sea*, Mch.).
Sibley, Hi, The Squinting Sheriff (*Brief S.*, Aug.).
Singmaster, Elsie, Little Lucy (*P. R.*, Dec.); Mrs. Barr (*L. H. J.*, May).
Small, Sidney, Herschel, Strange Places (*Ad.*, Mch. 15).
Smalley, Jack, Emperor of the Three (*Ac.*, Nov.).
Smith, Faith Ellen, Miracles Do Happen (*G. H.*, Aug.); Candlelight (*G. H.*, Dec.).
Smith, Frederic L., Sales Resistance (*S. E. P.*, May 3).
Smith, Hale, The Phantom Pilot (*Sea*, Mch.).
Smyth, Joseph Hilton, This Lost Generation (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 7); Back to Broadway (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 22); Just a Stubborn Fool (*Smart Set*, May).
Somerville, A. W., Wide-Open Throttle (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 8).
Speare, Dorothy, Vampires All (*P. R.*, Sept.).

Spears, Raymond S., Joe Baton's Government Truck (*S. S.*, Feb. 25); A Sheriff's Gun (*W.*, Apr. 16); Big Mountain Business (*Ad.*, May 1); A Dreamer of Dreams (*Ad.*, June 1).
Spencer, Mary Etta, Beyond the Years (*Op.*, Oct.).
Spitzer, Marian, Temperament—That's All (*W. H. C.*, Aug.).
Springs, Elliott White, Hokum (*L.*, Nov. 2); The Secret of Success (*L.*, Feb. 9); Hard Boiled Hannah (*L.*, Mch. 8).
Sprunt, Alexander, Jr., Tawny-Wing, Triumphant (*L. H. J.*, Apr.).
Squier, Emma-Lindsay, The Cloak of Desire (*Smart Set*, Oct.); Gold Afar (*G. H.*, Jan.); Jewels of the Dead (*Col.*, Jan. 18); The Heart of the Quetzal (*G. H.*, June).
Stait, Virginia, Money (*Ar.*, Dec.); "As It Ever Shall Be" (*B. S.*, Jan.); In India Ink: No Defense (*Ar.*, Apr.).
Stanley, May, Blue Water (*C. G.*, Oct.); Neighbors (*D.*, Dec.); The Scarlet Shawl (*C. G.*, Feb.).
Stark, Alfred Hall, White Man's Blood Comes High (*S. S.*, Sept. 15).
Stock, Henry W., The Rough Log (*Sea*, Sept.).
Stokes, Horace Winston, At the Foot of the Hill (*P. R.*, Oct.).
Sullivan, Maurice S., The Talkies Come to Town (*Am. Merc.*, Oct.).
Synon, Mary, Do You Know My Mother? (*R. B.*, Jan.); No Margin (*R. B.*, Apr.).

Tarkington, Booth, Belinda's Importance (*L. H. J.*, Jan.); Talk at Mary's Neck (*Am.*, Apr.).
Tarleton, Fiswoode, The Informer (*Ad.*, Jan. 15).
Terhune, Albert Payson, Comrades (*R. B.*, Aug.); Grim (*C. G.*, Jan.); The Bag from Nowhere (*C. G.*, Mch.); The Scourge (*L. H. J.*, Mch.).
Terrill, Lucy Stone, Beautiful Valley (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 21).
Terrill, Rogers, The Island of Little Hell (*S. S.*, Aug. 25).
Thibault, David, Clay *vs.* Neighbors (*Hol.*, Sept.).
Thomas, Elisabeth Finley, The Revealing Moment (*H. B.*, Jan.).
Thomas, Joseph F., They Call It Life (*C. W.*, May).
Thomas, Martha Banning, Square Deal Sings Small (*C. G.*, Aug.); Thorny Island (*C. G.*, Dec.).
Thomason, Capt. John W., Jr., Advance Guard (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).
Thompson, Don H., One Night in Audenarde (*War*, Jan.).

Thorne, Crichton Alston, Miss Sally and the Red Geranium (*House.*, Aug.).
Throck, Martin, The Conqueror (*Y.*, Jan.).
Tibby, Benjamin F., Keno Gets a Break (*Cow.*, Mch.).
Tildesley, Alice L., A Hollywood Love Story (*W. H. C.*, Feb.).
Titus, Harold, Crucible (*C. G.*, Sept.); Mute Witness (*Am.*, Oct.); Loyalty (*C. G.*, Mch.).
Tompkins, Juliet Wilbor, Lovely Woman (*W. H. C.*, Oct.); Fanny Foley Herself (*L. H. J.*, Apr.); Freedom (*W. H. C.*, Apr.).
Troy, Elizabeth, The Blue Plush Rabbit (*G. H.*, May).
Tuttle, W. C., A Scheme There Was (*Ad.*, Mch. 1).
Tyler, Charles W., The Bo Who Rode No. Two (*S. S.*, Sept. 25).

Upson, William Hazlett, Father Is Angry (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 3); The Vineyard at Schloss Ramsburg (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 19).

Van Riper, Donald, Menacing Loyalty (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 2).
Van Slyke, Lucille, Into the Caddy Cage (*C. T.*, Jan. 12).
Vorse, Mary Heaton, Comeback (*G. H.*, Sept.).

Walker, Ewing, Richelieu III (*B. B.*, Feb.); The Shanty-Boat Man (*Hol.*, June).
Wallace, William, Sea Diplomacy (*Sea*, Sept.).
Wallace, Warrack, Ping the Samaritan (*Sea*, Sept.).
Ward, Millard, Sea Doctor (*Sea*, Mch.); The Ringer (*C. H.*, Apr.); Bridge Ornament (*Sea*, Apr.); The City of Refuge (*Sea*, May).
Ware, Edward Parrish, The Trail of the Double Kill (*D. F.*, Sept. 7).
Warren, Maude Radford, High Calling (*C. T.*, Mch. 23).
Washburn, Beatrice, The Little Princess (*Hol.*, Jan.).
Watkins, Mary F., Stolen Thunder (*S. E. P.*, June 7).
Wayne, Palma, Alias Gally (*P. R.*, Jan.).
Wead, Frank, Deal Me Out (*S. E. P.*, May 24).
Weaver, John V. A., Labor of Love (*R.*, Aug.).
Webb, John, The Angle of Death (*S. S.*, Nov. 26).
Webber, Frank Martin, Breastplate and Helmet (*Hol.*, Dec.).
Wertenbaker, Charles, Fraternally Yours (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 14); Pat Hobson's Boots (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 30).
West, Wilton, The Drifter (*B. B.*, Aug.).

Weston, George, The Girl at Zinky's (*Col.*, Oct. 19); The Girl Who Blushed (*Col.*, Nov. 16).
Wetjen, Albert Richard, Nothing but a Ghost (*Col.*, Sept. 14); There Were Giants (*S. E. P.*, May 3).
White, Nelia Gardner, "Love Is Not Love" (*Am.*, Sept.); Star in the East (*McCall*, Dec.); Cheap (*McCall*, Mch.).
White, Owen P., Portia, West of the Pecos (*Col.*, Aug. 10).
Whitehead, Henry S., The Lips (*W. T.*, Sept.).
Whitman, Vic, Hey, Taxi! (*T.*, Jan. 15); Frame-Up (*T.*, Mch. 15).
Wilds, S., Oh, California! (*Sea*, Sept.).
Wiley, Hugh, Stubborn (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 7); Safety (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 7); Once a Bridge Man (*Col.*, May 17).
Williams, Ben Ames, Preferred Lies (*S. E. P.*, Aug. 3).
Williams, Henry Meade, A Man of Character (*Scr.*, May).
Willson, Dixie, Mr. Money (*Am.*, Sept.); Who Kissed Me? (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); Jolly Good Boots (*D.*, Dec.); Mr.Venus (*L.*, May 3).
Wilson, Alexander, Regular (*Ac.*, Feb.).
Wilson, Forrest, Very Private Scandal (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.); It's a Great Place to Visit (*H. I. and C.*, June).
Wilson, Mary Badger, The Girl Who Had Everything (*W. H. C.*, Feb.); Endurance Flight (*G. H.*, May).
Winchester, Robert, "Crawl Out on the Wing!" (*R. B.*, Oct.), War Paint (*B. B.*, Nov.).
Winkler, John K., Ice-Cream (*R. B.*, Aug.).
Winslow, Seymour, Initiation (*C. G.*, Sept.).
Winslow, Thyra Samter, Alibi (*C. T.*, Mch. 30); Matt (*C. T.*, June 29).
Winsmore, Robert, Peter the Fourteenth (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 7); Bonds of Service (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 15).
Witwer, H. C., She Dupes to Conquer (*Col.*, Aug. 3); Punch and Rudy (*Col.*, Oct. 5).
Wolfe, Thomas, An Angel on the Porch (*Scr.*, Aug.).
Wolff, William Almon, Captain Courageous (*Col.*, Oct. 12); Initiative (*Hol.*, Mch.).
Wood, Gracia Pope, Cora (*House.*, Oct.).
Wood, Philip, Matinee Idyl (*Scr.*, Oct.).
Wood, Quintan, The Battle in the Slaps (*Hol.*, Jan.); Thunder Earns a Pardon (*Hol.*, Feb.); Tiger of the Air (*Hol.*, May).
Woodside, James, Under Way for Honolulu (*Sea*, Sept.).
Woolrich, Cornell, Gay Music (*C. H.*, Jan.).

Worthington, Louise, Madame Rossignol (*F.*, Sept.).
Worts, George F., The Blue Fire Pearl (*S. S.*, Mch. 10); Jilted (*L.*, Mch. 22).
Wright, Roscoe, Escape (*S. E. Q.*, Annual, June, 1930).
Wright, Sewell Peaslee, Berkhead Waits (*T.*, Jan. 15); "Almost Dewey" (*L.*, Apr. 5).
Wylie, Philip, The Long End (*Hol.*, Jan.).

Yates, Brett, Golden Ocean (*R.*, Jan.).
Yore, Clem, Eyes of Terror (*S. S.*, Aug. 25).
Young, James H., Defiance (*Op.*, Nov.).

LIST IV

Of short short stories the following rank highest:

Aldis, Dorothy, Mr. and Mrs. Smith (*P. R.*, August).
Andrews, Robert D., The One-Day Story (*P. T.*, January).

Blackman, M. C., A Good Little Feature (*L.*, Dec. 28).
Blodgett, Ruth, Blossoming (*P. M.*, May).
Bromfield, Louis, Picture (*P. T.*, Oct.).
Brophy, Edward, Antidote for Monotony (*L.*, Dec. 7).
Broun, Heywood, Try Again (*N. Y.*, Jan. 4).
Brush, Katharine, The Beautiful House (*R. B.*, Jan.).
Buckley, F. R., False-Face (*Col.*, Sept. 28).

Canfield, Jane, An' You, Miss Susan (*Boul.*, Sept.).
Castle, Marian, The Lady Sins (*L.*, Mch. 15).
Cohen, Octavus Roy, The Fifty-Cent Peace (*Col.*, Aug. 17); Rough Passage (*Col.*, Aug. 31).
Connell, Richard, Two Wise Men (*Col.*, Mch. 8).
Connelly, Marc, Coroner's Inquest (*Col.*, Feb. 8).
Creel, George, The Last Miracle (*Home.*, April).

Draper, Edythe Squier, Poindexter (*House.*, Jan.).
Duranty, Walter, The Gold Louis (*Ad.*, Feb. 1).

Edgar, Day, You Grow Up (*L. H. J.*, Nov.).
Eldridge, Paul, Bobo and Bebe (*Strat.*, Apr.).
Emory, William Closson, Matinee (*House.*, Dec.); Afterwards (*House.*, Apr.).

Harvey, Constance, A Prime Letter (*Boul.*, Sept.).
Held, John, Jr., Till the James Runs Dry (*H. B.*, Mch.); A Touch of Paradise (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).

Johnson, Dorothy Marie, The Fruit Tramps (*Fr.*, Jan.).

Kahler, Hugh MacNair, Five Grand (*Col.*, Aug. 10); Kick (*Col.*, Apr. 12).

Lindley, Denver, Strong Medicine (*Col.*, Dec. 14).

McClure, John, Father and Son (*Am. S. S.*, Jan.).
McKenna, Edward L., Invictus (*P. T.*, Oct.).
Merrill, Kenneth Griggs, Warmth (*Scr.*, Dec.).
Mullins, Helene, Michael's Love (*Am. S. S.*, Mch.).

Pennington, Lawrence, Wisdom (*Scr.*, Oct.).
Poole, Ernest, Before the Plunge (*Col.*, Feb. 15).

Ross, Madeleine A., What Price Happiness? (*P. T.*, Feb.).

Slusser, Herbert, Truant Afternoon (*P. M.*, June).
Smith, Elsie Hawes, Hard-Boiled (*House.*, Sept.).

Whitehead, Henry S., The Tabernacle (*W. T.*, Jan.).

Of the short short stories the following rank second:

Alger, William R., A Heathen Diplomat (*Am. S. S.*, Jan.).

Barr, Mark, No Risk (*Col.*, Oct. 19).
Bird, Will R., Paid-Up Member (*Col.*, June 14).
Bolton, Francis, Heavy Sugar Daddy (*L.*, Nov. 30).
Bromley, Al, The Man Who Stole a River (*R. D. T.*, Aug.); Dead and Buried (*R. D. T.*, May).
Buckley, F. R., Soft Answer (*Elks.*, Apr.); Punch, Brother, Punch (*Col.* May 10).
Butts, Walter E., Jr., In the Dark (*L.*, May 17).

Cartwright, Peter, Breakaway (*L.*, Mch. 22).
Chitwood, Agnes Cady, The Last Corner (*W. V. R.*, Oct.).

Cohen, Octavus Roy, Sunrise (*Col.*, Jan. 11); Troupers (*Col.*, Jan. 25); Adjustment (*Col.*, Feb. 22).
Colohan, John, The Game of Life (*L.*, Oct. 12).
Condon, Frank, Publicity (*Col.*, Aug. 3).
Connell, Richard, Thick Turk (*Col.*, Jan. 4); The Memory Course (*Col.*, Mch. 22).

Daingerfield, Foxhall, Lion! (*L.*, Oct. 26).
Dale, Virginia, Bride's Progress (*H. I. and C.*, June).
de Ford, Miriam Allen, Ever Decorous (*Am. S. S.*,Mch.).
Detzer, Karl W., A Good Job (*Col.*, Sept. 7); A Woman Can Change (*L.*, June 21).

Emory, William Closson, Dimension 4 (*Mor.*, Autumn Number).
Evans, Hubert, That's Good Enough (*War.*, Aug. 15).

Ferguson, W. Ron, In a Bottle (*Col.*, Nov. 16).
Flanagan, Dorothy Belle, Interview (*L.*, Nov. 2).
Ford, William C., Taken for a Ride (*L.*, Dec. 21).

Gallico, Paul, Testimony (*L.*, Jan. 4).
Gilpatric, Guy, Signor Raffi's Haircut (*Col.*, May 31).
Grace, Dick, They Mistook My Profession (*Ad.*, Apr. 1).
Green, Lawrence G., Smelling Danger (*Sea*, May).

Hahn, Mannel, The Getaway (*R. D. T.*, May).
Hare, Amory, Unsigned Letters (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).
Hatch, Eric, Snoozer'll Do Nicely (*L. H. J.*, Aug.).
Hobart, Donald Bayne, The Scent of Danger (*R. D. T.*, Aug.).
Hurd, Charles W. B., Revolt (*L.*, Feb. 1).

Ireland, Irma Thompson, An Hour in the Night (*H. Merc.*, Aug.).
Irwin, Wallace, Mothers (*Col.*, Jan. 18); Doomed (*Col.*, Mch. 29); Head Together (*Col.*, Apr. 19); Above the Stars (*Col.*, May 3).

Jensen, Peggy, Sky Hero's Wife (*L.*, June 14).
Jerrold, Karin, Perhaps a Good Thing (*L.*, Apr. 19).

Kantor, MacKinlay, Kitchenette (*R. B.*, Apr.).
Kennedy, John B., The Ride (*Col.*, Oct. 12); Four Minutes (*Col.*, Nov. 23); Secret Service (*Col.*, Dec. 28); The Unrepentant Thief (*Col.*, Mch. 8); The Black Watch (*Col.*, June 21).

King, Loretta, Pay Station (*L.*, Jan. 18).
Kinney, W. A., The Perfect Servant (*L.*, Apr. 26).

Lawrenson, Harry, Overheard (*L.*, Feb. 22).
Lee, Virginia B., Fly in the Soup (*House.*, June).
LeMay, Alan, Sentenced to Swing (*Col.*, Dec. 7).
Lindley, Denver, The Hold-Out (*Col.*, Sept. 14).

McCausland, Carrie Tibbets, One Strong Thing (*L.*, June 7).
Mann, B. D., His Own Coin (*Col.*, Sept. 21).
Marquis, Don, Why M'Ginnis Sighed (*Col.*, May 17).
Moore, David William, Black Truth (*Scr.*, Sept.).
Murray, Keith, Insect Love (*Am. S. S.*, Jan.).

Pettee, Florence, Blood Heat (*R. D. T.*, Aug.).
Phillips, Henry Wallace, A Chance Shot (*B. M.*, Jan.).
Powers, Paul S., Doped (*R. D. T.*, Aug.).

Sayres, Cortlandt W., Romantique (*R.*, Jan.).
Shumway, Harry Irving, The Blood Flower (*T.*, 1st June No.).
Sigmund, Jay G., The Blasphemer (*Mor.*, Autumn Number); The Broken Pump (*Fr.*, Mch.).
Simmonds, Walter, Kinda' Hard (*L.*, Apr. 5).
Skerry, Frederick, Fatal Distinctions (*Col.*, Nov. 30); With Love (*Col.*, Dec. 21); Interference (*Col.*, Mch. 1).
Snow, Edgar, Opium (*L.*, May 10).

Thibault, David, Cupid's Follow-Up (*Col.*, Apr. 5).
Tipton, Stanley, There's Always a Way (*Col.*, Nov. 2).
Tomlinson, Ned, A Chicago Fantasy (*L.*, Mch. 29).
Tooke, Alfred I., Not to Be Sneezed At (*House.*, Feb.).

Woodford, Jack, Three Wise Men (*R. D. T.*, Aug.).

York, Will, Like a Demontreville (*Am. S. S.*, Jan.).

Zucca, Carlo, Pescatore (*H. Merc.*, Aug.).

70
71
72
74
75
76
77
79
83
85
89

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